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ADULTS ONLY



Adam

1960 ANNUAL

a word from ADAM

THIS is the third ADAM ANNUAL, and by all means the most varied and exciting. Have you ever dreamed of being transported through time to days of yore? Then you'll go for Connie Sellers' "Time Enough", in which a washed-up prizefighter is taken back to Ancient Rome to compete as a gladiator in the arena with life or death as the stakes.

- Do you go for humor with a strong dash of spice? Then turn to "Virtue Is a Landlubber" or "ADAM's Private Funmobile" or "ADAM's Tales". If crime fiction is your dish, try Ray Dennison's "Market for Murder" — and if you go for the bizarre, "Witchcraft — the Magic Empire" will give you in hot fact, the excitement you will find fictionally in "The Mass of St. Secaire".
- Finally, if you go for girls, you cannot miss. You are in for the feast of the year.

IF YOU go for blonde showgirls with eye-popping faces and figures, then Sheika Moser (opposite page) is your dream-girl. Sheika, who hales from far Vienna, is currently strutting her abundant stuff at Las Vegas' El Rancho, and flew to Hollywood especially to have her picture shot for ADAM'S ANNUAL by Bernard of Hollywood.



• San Antonio, Texas, may still have its Alamo, but it has lost to Hollywood and ADAM a far more decorative monument in sexbomb Ann Atmar, of whose enticing charms you'll see more — much more! — on page 80.

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BLIND DATE BLUES

by MARTIN COURTNEY

**For a guy with nothing on the ball, I managed to
draw the wildest chick any Casanova ever dreamed of**

LIKE I SAID, I was surprised to get the call from Evan. Ever since he won out with Sally, I figured the less he saw of me around, the better. Not that we were enemies or anything like that — but if you've ever laid eyes on Sally, you'll understand.

Sally is a dish — a real, golden-blonde, 38-24-35 honey, with a face like an angel with naughty thoughts and a voice that spells S-E-X right around the clock. Put her in a strapless evening gown, or a bikini, or nothing at all (I should be that lucky!) and you got something worth walking a lot of kilometers for.

I'd been carrying the torch for Sally ever since I first caught sight of her undulating rear elevation heading for the water-cooler my first day in the new office. It was as sudden as that. But I never got out of the batter's box, much less to first base, and even further from the complete circuit of the bases I was

longing for with every itch.

Sally liked me okay — but that wasn't enough. She was looking for bigger game. When Evan showed up in his four-passenger new T-bird, with his crew cut and Ivy League manners, I was D-E-A-D, dead. Not that I ever did have much life in that game.

Whenever I did wangle a date with Sally, I always found myself paired off for the evening with some other doll she had along for the occasion. They weren't all so awful, I suppose — if I hadn't been so took up and shook up with Sally, I might have made out okay. But the way things were — nothing!

So when Evan took over, I faded out. I know when I'm outclassed. Which was why his calling me at work and asking me to go out with him and Sally that evening came as a distinct surprise. He said, "Sally was saying just this morning you've been too much the

—turn the page

*"Come here, Honey,"
she whispered, "and start my
ganglions jangling."*



BLUES, from page 5

stranger lately, Joe."

I thought it over and counted to one. Then I said, "Okay, it's a date. Where and when?"

"We're having a drink at Sally's place, then going out on the town. About six." He paused, then added, "And by the way, Sally's got an old school-chum visiting her. Name's Lori, and she's a real doll. You'll go for her like a ton of bricks."

"Yeah," I said, remembering other, similar occasions and getting that hey-I've-been-here-before feeling. "Sure."

I had been transferred to another of the company's offices in town — hell, I managed the joint — so I couldn't make direct contact with Sally and thank her for the invitation and tell her what I thought of her for sticking me with another blind date. It looked like I was in for a long, miserable, probably expensive evening, with nothing but frustration ahead for playing the patsy. So I left work an hour early and did some preliminary tanking at Reilly's Grill. By the time I reached Sally's, I was feeling no anguish whatsoever.

This broad opens the door, and I'm stopped dead. She's a blue-winged blonde, and a knockout. She looks at me with one eyebrow arched high, and I try not to breathe down the cleavage

she's showing and say, "I'm Joe — you must be Lori. Hi."

"Hi, yourself," she says, looking me over like I'm a fresh peeled potato about to go into the pot. She inhales and wrinkles a nose Cleopatra should have had one of and says, "Man! Where did you pick up that lovely whiskey breath?"

"It came in the mail," I tell her.

"Sharp, very sharp," she says, letting me in. Then, yelling to Sally, out of sight inside the apartment somewhere, "Honey, Joe's here. What do you mean he's got two left feet?"

This was going to be a dandy, a James M. Dandy. Sally came busting in a moment later, with her zipper still unzipped, looking like something or somethings wonderful might pop out any second. She backs up to me, and I zip her regretfully, and she says, soft-life, over her shoulder, "Joe, I gotta talk to you."

"So talk," I say, but she flags me not with Lori in the room. I gather Evan isn't there yet, so I'm with those two gorgeous hunks of female pulchritude. Me — Joe — alone with them. What a spot for a Casanova — and I don't know how to open the play.

Lori takes a hint and lopes off to mix the straight vodka or something, and Sally comes real close to me and says, "Joe, I'm in over my depth. This

Sally — she's a swell girl and all that, but she's changed since school."

"Viva la change!" I counter and get a sorrowful look in return.

"What I mean," says Sally, soft and quick, "you got to take care of her. She's man-crazy, and I'm scared about Evan."

"Maybe," I say, picking up the ball, "I should go out to the kitchen and help Lori. Isn't that the doorbell now?"

"You're a dove!" says Sally, standing on tiptoe to give me a peck on the cheek. "If I hadn't fallen for Evan . . ." She leaves to answer the door, and I move off in a mental mixmaster to take over in the kitchen.

Lori was there, up to her elbows in ice-cubes. She's also been doing some catching up from the vodka. She says, "Maybe you're just what I need, Joe. I like Sally and all that, but I went with Evan before he ever saw her. In fact, we had an understanding before he took a job in this city. I want him back."

"Lucky Pierre!" I murmur, thinking of that big crew-cut goon with both those gorgeous gals playing tug of war with him.

"What's that?" she asks, peering at me. Man! — there's an awful lot of girl there! Then she says, "Never mind." She puts both bare arms around my neck and looks me deep in the eye and says, "Honey, you and I are going to have a little kick all our own. We're going to make Evan jealous. I can see the old flame in his eyes when he looks at me — banked, but still glowing."

"What do you see when I look at you?" I ask, getting closer to all those curves.

"A hungry man," she replies, smiling. The next thing I know, she has moved in, and the drinks have to wait. She kisses me and our tongues do a breathtaking little dance together, "Hold me closer, honey," she breathes when it's possible, and it begins to look like a spot of action right there. But then Evan and Sally appear in the doorway.

Evan says, "For God's sake, Lori — what's going on?"

Lori pulls clear, but not very much, from me and regards him with scorn, "A stupid question if ever I heard one!" she says.

"Joe . . .!" bleats Sally, and I can see she's shook up.

"Really!" exclaims Evan. He's immensely good looking if you like them refined, sort of, and he always looks like a character out of *Esquire* or something, but I never realized before he was a stuffed shirt. I unhand Lori

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Adam



"Sam. Will you take a slow careful look around and tell me if YOU see anything unusual this morning . . ."



full-blooded halfbreed



**Actress-Model-Nudist-Showgirl
Aliscyn Sanborn is Part-Sioux
Part-Blackfoot and All Girl!**

IT HARDLY demands a connoisseur of photography to realize instantly two fascinating facets of the many that go to make up the complete Aliscyn Sanborn. One is the fact that Aliscyn is a superbly fashioned sample of young womanhood — the other is that she is also thoroughly at home in the nude!

• Save to add that she tapes at a round, round, *round!* 43-26-37, and stands 5'7" tall, there seems no reason not to let the pictures speak for themselves where Aliscyn is concerned. However, the item acent her being at home in the nude requires amplification. Believe it or not, Aliscyn lived for some time in a Nevada nudist camp and states, "It's a more healthy life — utterly relaxed. Taking off your clothes makes you feel honest all over."

• For the rest, Aliscyn has packed a heap o' livin' into her brief two decades. She has both Sioux and Blackfoot blood in her veins, has lived in Indian country and even speaks a little Navaho. A fine dancer (ballet), a showgirl (the Dunes in Vegas), a film actress ("The Immortal Mr. Teas"), Aliscyn may cinemact in Jugoslavia soon.





**Above Pete's Saloon, nobody knew the
girls' names—they came by the back stairs
and left when they'd had enough**

the room upstairs

SOMETIMES, WHEN I was at Pete's, I used to wonder what in hell I was doing there. More often, though, I'd feel that when I'd wake up the next morning, with my mouth full of tongue and my head full of gremlins, I'd swear off and stay away two or three nights, but then, when I got off the swing shift at the plant and Angie wasn't dating me, I'd head right back there and start all over again.

Appearance-wise, there wasn't much you could say for Pete's. It was just another corner saloon in just another small city. Above the door hung a neon sign that was supposed to spell out the name — P-E-T-E-'-S — but some kid's snowball had busted part of it, so all that showed was P-E-T-E'-, without the S.

This was typical of the joint. Inside, one of the beer-taps didn't work, so the place got by with just one. The barstool you sat on could goose you with a busted spring, and the chairs in back were rickety, and the tables rocked unless somebody put a matchbook under one of the legs. If you wanted to stuff your gut with food, the cook was always out of what you ordered, and you had to take something else or go some other place.

But, somehow, you didn't. At least, I didn't, and I never saw anyone else go out for anything except to go home, in spite of all the beefing about its being a crummy, broken-down joint. Pete never fixed anything. Standing behind the bar, in his dirty white apron, he'd say, "Okay, maybe next week" — but by next week something else would be busted and nothing done about it. About all you could count on was the booze — which was good, and cheap, and always on hand.

And the companionship, of course. Pete's was a saloon, a man's joint, with no frills to draw the broads. Did you ever stop to think how many places nowadays a man can go to relax and maybe have a ball without being smothered in dolls? They got the barber shops and the good saloons and restaurants all wrapped up. It's apron-strings wherever you go, or maybe a bra or a garter belt if you're

— turn the page

All she said was,
"you son of a bitch.."

by H. H. GENTILE



UPSTAIRS, from page 10

real lucky. Me, I like broads, all right, but not everywhere and all the time. Even in the plant, my box-boy was a dame wearing coveralls and grease on the side of her nose.

Pete had his own way of handling them, when one or two of them came in. He never said anything—he didn't have to. All he did was manage not to hear their orders. He'd keep them waiting till they were half-crazy, then maybe give them a drink they didn't want. And none of us guys went against him by making a play on the premises. If one of the boys wanted a woman bad enough, there was always the upstairs room.

Pete was a real old-fashioned saloon-keeper, and he had the political connections to prove it. Otherwise, he'd never have been able to operate the room. It wasn't a regular nightly thing, of course, though he tried to have someone up there to service the boys Tuesday paynights and Fridays and Saturdays.

Nobody ever knew their names, or if they did, never let on. They came in by a back stairway, and left the same way

when they'd had enough. One night, the Professor—he didn't teach anywhere anymore, but he sure had the background for the job—started spouting about Pete's room upstairs being like the room in an ancient temple where women came to prostitute themselves to the service of some pagan god.

At that, Dino Wilson, down the bar, shouted, "And what god do the broads upstairs service?"

The Professor just gave him a bleary-eyed look and said, "Mammon, dear boy—Mammon is his name."

That stopped us cold until the next night Dino came in laughing. He'd looked it up in a dictionary and found Mammon meant the god of money. We all thought the Professor had pulled a pretty cute gag, and after that, for a while, we called all the girls who came to the room Mammon for a name.

Me, I never went up there. I didn't need to. I had myself fixed up nice and neat, Angie was her name, and she lived with her mother in the same boarding house where I had a room. All very convenient. She worked a swing-shift, too, in a plant across town, but her job

didn't pay much and she racked up all the overtime she could, which was why I didn't get to see her every night. And that was okay with me, because two-three nights a week is all I need.

I got to know her right after I moved into the boarding house and got my job at the plant. I'm a machinist-foreman, and if I do say it myself, I draw down good dough. I got my own heap, and I never have much trouble lining up what I want.

The way I got to know Angie was real screwball. Actually, I saw her mother first and made a play for her. Sal—that's her name—was quite a dish, too. Built like a brick outhouse with plenty of these and those, and platinum hair and a face that knew its way around. I took her out to dinner one night, a week or so after I moved in, and she played it cute and asked me a lot of questions about myself. Right when I thought I was scoring, she said, "I want you to meet somebody."

She got me to drive her to Angie's plant and give her a lift home after work. When she said, "Joe, Angie here's my baby—I want you to be good to her," I damn near flipped. But when I got a good look at her, I decided Sal had done me a favor and said, "You must of been a child bride, Sal."

"Damn near it," Sal said, "How do you like her?"

Usually, when a broad puts a guy on the spot like that, he's forced to agree. But with Angie, there was no need for force. One look at her, and I knew this was a real doll. She was dark and small and soft, and she had a tiny little pouting mouth and great big dark eyes that told you here was a babe who couldn't be mean if she tried to.

We took Sal back to the boarding house, and I hung around while Angie got into a cute little red dress, and then I took her out dancing. She fitted into me like she's been custom built for the job, and we had a few and sat around and talked until closing. Then I took her out for a ride, down by the shore, and we parked, and I was just getting her swinging when a car-cop put his light on us and broke it up.

She said, sort of soft, "I'm glad, Joe."

I was sore. I said, "Glad? What in hell for?"

"It would have been too soon, Joe," she said.

"It's never too soon," I told her. We argued back and forth like that all the way back, with me still tasting her lipstick and my hands tingling from the fullness of her breasts, and beginning to be afraid maybe things weren't going to work out the way I'd hoped when Sal tossed her at me.

When I pulled into my parking place, in back of the house, she leaned against

Adam



"Say — That guy was in the other two places we burgled this week."

me and said, "You're not sore, Joe?"

"No—but I'm damn disappointed," I told her.

"Don't be," she whispered, and I knew everything was on.

I slid out from under the wheel. Angie sat on my lap, and I gave her a kiss that must have lasted ten minutes. What happened after that was what nature must have intended when she started the whole business of sex. It was two hours before we got out of the car and went inside to sleep.

The way things broke, I didn't get to see Angie again for a couple of days—either she was out, or I was. I went half out of my mind, thinking of what was waiting there for me, right down the hall every night, and not being able to connect. So, the third night, instead of going home after work, I drove across-town to where Angie had her job, figuring on picking her up when she came out.

I was lucky. When I got there, there she was, looking like the angel she was named for in tight-fitting pedal-pushers and a bright red chubby. She was with a couple of other girls, waiting for a bus, but when I pulled up at the curb and honked, she burst out in a big smile, and I knew I was in.

When I suggested taking her somewhere, she just leaned back against the seat beside me and shook her head. "No, Joe," she said, "I don't feel like going out tonight. Take me home."

I figured I was out, then, and I was too sore to say a word. I just drove her home as fast as my heap would carry us. When we got to the parking place, she put her arms around me and kissed me, and it was for real. But before I could really get punching, she had pulled clear of me and was out of the car.

"I'm going in," she said, and there was nothing I could do but follow, feeling like a half-boiled turnip. Right then, I'd like to have wrung the little minx's neck.

When we got to her door, she just stood there, looking up at me with those big, big sexy eyes and her hand on the knob. Then she said, very, very soft, "Mom's out tonight . . ."

I got the pitch then. She'd been giving me the tease. When we got inside, she said, "I was afraid you wouldn't want to see me again, after the other night. Where were you yesterday?"

"A machine broke down at the plant," I told her, "I didn't get through till after midnight. I was beginning to think I was out of luck."

"So was I," she said. She slipped out of the red chubby. Underneath, she had on a black jersey that fitted her like a mermaid's skin—and what a guitar-shaped little honey she was! Her arms

went around my neck, and she stood on tiptoe with that tiny little mouth reaching for mine. I gathered her in, and it felt like I'd just got home with six winners at once.

The way things went after that, it was no wonder I never had to visit the upstairs' room at Pete's. Angie was so hot for me that if Pete had had Hollywood's two biggest sexpots both up there working for free, I wouldn't have given it a second thought.

Then, one night, when I was off work and waiting around my room to get rested up for Angie, her mother paid me a visit. I tried to get up off the bed, but she just pushed me back, casual as hell, and sat on the foot and took the cigarette out of the corner of her mouth. She was, like I said earlier, a real looker still, but she wasn't Angie, and Angie was all that mattered right then.

She said, "Joe, you look like a good boy to me, and my kid seems to think the world revolves around you."

"Yeah?" I said, wondering what the hell was coming next.

She looked at me, lying there in my skivvies, and her eyes narrowed and her nostrils widened, and she said, "For

two bits, I'd . . ." But then she caught herself and laughed, kind of shaky, and said, "But that's not why I came busting in here."

"Why did you come?" I asked her, beginning to wish she'd get lost and leave me alone.

"Kid," she said after blowing a couple of smoke-rings at me, "you got no beefs—right?"

"I guess not," I told her, and I hadn't. "I hear you and Angie are thinking of getting married," she said, and I had to admit there had been some talk about it between us. "Angie's not for you," she went on. "You're a hell of a good kid, and all that, but I'm thirty-six. I can't go on in my work forever—maybe two-three years at the most. When I quit, I want my little girl set—really set."

Can you tie that? The mother of the girl I was sleeping with coming in and asking me not to marry her? What's more, it made me sore—plenty sore, I said, "You're talking crazy—I make enough to take care of both of you."

"Sure," she said, "for now. And you're good for Angie. I'd a lot rather

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"Alice, if we ever get out of this . . ."



Despite infamy and sacrilege, the black arts are responsible for much of our scientific progress

WITCHCRAFT

the magic empire

by K. ROBERT HOWARD

LAST MARCH 18, a solemn, bespectacled, 18-year-old biochemistry student at the University of Redlands, California, died under mysterious circumstances.

Superficially, Michael Hawks' death looked at first like just another tragedy striking down a promising young man on the brink of maturity. But then bizarre elements began coming to light that put the teenage biochemical student's death almost into the realm of fantasy. For it quickly grew apparent that the deceased had been delving extensively in the effects of such drugs as mushroom crystals, mescaline and lysergic acid, all dangerous and known to produce hallucinations in their users, along with oleander and other deadly poisons.

Although his motivation and methods were scientific, what Michael Hawks was practicing was nothing more nor less than witchcraft!

Few nowadays are aware that what we call witchcraft was actually an underground religion that, in Western Europe alone, fought the organized church for 1,500 years and that still survives in many remote, backward regions.

Essentially, what we know as witchcraft was the theory of magic, the rule of prophecy, that has only lately been superceded in the mind of man by the scientific method.

Because of its stubborn endurance against the entire weight of modern organized thought and morality, this empire of magic that long ruled the world from the wilds of New Guinea to the hex-marked barns of the Pennsylvania Dutch, has been smeared, re-

pressed and largely ignored by Christianity and science alike. Only in recent decades has anything like an unbiased study of its practices, from voodoo charms to visionary, oracular prophecy been undertaken.

Lysergic acid (LSD), with which Hawks was experimenting, is a laboratory distillation of certain herb-forms which is known to produce visions on the part of the user, and is used in treating certain types of insanity. Mescaline, which has long been made from the juice of the peyote cactus by the Indians of New Mexico and Arizona, has been the subject of a brilliant study by famous British novelist-philosopher Aldous Huxley, who used himself as a guinea pig.

As for the mushrooms found in Hawks' room, their study is far more world-wide, ancient and intriguing, although, in them too, hallucination is what the users seek. In 1957, R. Gordon Wasson, Minnesota-born vice-president of J. P. Morgan & Co., and his Russian-born wife, Valentina, published at \$125 per copy an elaborate report on their 30-year study of these strange fungoid growths, a research project that carried them into all places and times on this planet.

In their studies, Banker Wasson and his wife were ultimately led to a remote Mexican village, where he and Allan Richardson, a New York photographer, tested and made records and reports of the ritual with which the eating of certain special fungoids was followed.

Said he, in part, of the experience, "The visions were not blurred — They were sharply focused, the lines and

colors being so sharp that they seemed more real to me than anything I had ever seen with my own eyes . . . I was seeing the archetypes, the Platonic ideas, that underlie the imperfect images of everyday life . . . Could the divine mushrooms be the secret behind the ancient mysteries? Could the miraculous mobility that I was now enjoying be the explanation for the flying witches that played so important a part in the folklore of Western Europe?"

As a matter of fact, these questions are hardly far-fetched. So prevalent throughout the world were the ideas of trances, of prophecy, of frenzy and of ability to transport oneself via the air, that in lands where the mushroom was outlawed or unavailable, substitutes were found to give the yearned-for magical reactions to the initiate. Either through stimulative or narcotic qualities, or the power of suggestion on the users, such substitutes were generally effective.

Nor were the uses of these vegetable derivatives confined merely to visionary or prophetic ends. As far back as the thirteenth chapter of Genesis, we find Jacob, anxious to increase the fertility of Laban's herd, feeding the cattle peeled rods of chestnut, hazel and green poplar, which caused the sheep, goats, etc., to copulate and conceive.

As the late Montague Summers points out in his "The History of Witchcraft", the witch-hazel reveals by its name its long association with magical rites. But the most famous non-fungoid magic food was the mandrake root. In recent centuries, use of

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Between death and isolation in infinite time,
Joe Rain's only weapon was his own failure

TIME ENOUGH

by CONNIE SELLERS

EYES SHUT, Joe felt rough texture against his palm. It was hand-hewn stone; the chisel marks were deep. But buildings weren't made of such material any more.

Far back in his throat was the metal taste of electricity. His head wobbled and his eyes fought open. Afternoon sunlight slanted across the alleyway, and it was all much clearer than pictures in history books.

Weakly, Joe leaned against the building, hoping for one wild moment that he had slipped a cog, that he was crazy. If not, the little professor had been right, and Joe was a long way from home.

He pushed away from the wall and took the longest step ever made by man. The movement spanned nineteen centuries and brought him out into a marketplace of Rome, in 16 A.D.

Then he remembered. Professor Gibbons said he'd be damned sure to mark the place in his mind. Joe turned and stared at the alley behind him, memorizing every detail. In exactly one day, three hours and nineteen minutes, he'd better be standing here, right on this spot.

If he wasn't, Joe Rain would be dead for one hell of a long time before he was born.

Joe moved carefully through the crowded marketplace and found a wineshop. He needed time to think, to adjust himself, to get accustomed to the swirl of colors and strange people chattering about him.

Feeling naked in his knee-length wool tunic, he sat down on a stool, remembering to adjust the toga across his shoulder. Heavy with gold, a coin pouch hung beside a jeweled dagger at his belt.

Because Joe wore the clothing of nobles, the innkeeper bowed when he brought wine, and went swiftly away. Joe sipped at the coolness of good claret, and thought of an ad in a newspaper. For a guy at loose ends, it had seemed a real break. Its specifications had been made in order . . . "Speak Italian; some background Latin, Roman history. Top physical condition, free to travel."

Everything fitted, because Joe hadn't always been a just-retired fighter. There were the two years in college before he found he was good with his fists. And he was certainly free to travel; no family, no home — not even a girl, any more.

But the professor hadn't said just how far he'd have to travel; not until after the rugged months of physical training and skull-

—turn the page

The slave merchant forced the girl to her knees. "Feel, noble sir . . ." he invited.



grinding study. The training washed out the other two applicants, but it had been second nature to Joe.

Joe shook his cropped head and took another swallow of wine. The crowd surged past him, but he didn't really see the people. He saw instead the long, shadowy line of many dressing rooms, all cloyed with the combination of odors so peculiar to fighters—sweat and wintergreen, adhesive tape and cocoa butter, and sometimes blood.

When he answered that ad, some of that smell must have still been clinging to him. Professor Gibbons had looked shrewdly into Joe's face and saw the marks of the trade there: a thickened lip, scar tissue building across the eyebrows; an ear beginning to puff. The professor had shaken his head, started to say good physical condition alone wasn't enough.

That was when Joe Rain jolted the little guy with a Latin phrase. *"Quae nocent, docent . . . we learn by what we suffer."*

Professor Gibbons had said, "And so?"

In Italian, Joe told him his real name was Guiseppe Rainieri, that he fought as Joe Rain, and started to call off the emperors of ancient Rome. He got as far as Commodus when Gibbons stopped him.

Joe was glad Gibbons hadn't asked him why he quit the ring. There was no way to tell a man who hadn't been there. It was hard enough to tell it to yourself, to realize that a couple of guys were an edge faster, just a fraction tougher and smarter.

All Gibbons had said was: "I saw you on TV last week."

Joe had shrugged. "I wasn't watching; I was busy."

Busy getting the hell sliced out of him by Eddie Thorp's left hand, busy taking a lesson from the champ's policeman. And he couldn't blame it on an off night; Thorp had just been too good. The champ was that much better.

So where did that leave Joe Rain? At twenty-six, he took a quick peep into the future and didn't like what he saw there—gates that would get smaller and smaller; a stumblebum hanging around gyms for handouts. At twenty-six, Joe Rain was a has-been, looking for a place to start over.

Then it had come in crazy succession—the ad, the professor; the fine-mesh gateway humming with violent power. And here was the wrap-up—Rome in the time of the Emperor Tiberius. Time travel, with the first customer one Joe Rain, ex-pug with a smattering of education.

He shook himself. There were things

he had to do for the professor, historical legends to look into. And time was short. In one day, switches would be thrown, huge generators nearly two thousand years in the future would thunder to life, and the mesh gateway would tear another rip in the fabric of time. It would hold long enough for Joe to return to his own world; just long enough.

If nothing happened; if a generator didn't fail; if the time warp worked exactly the same way again, Joe closed his mind against all the *ifs* and looked into his wine goblet. He saw his fingers whitened around the stem, and forced himself to relax. He had to remember that—act normal, don't call attention to himself.

His accented Latin wouldn't betray him, for there were many foreigners in Rome—men from Gaul; Greek traders; Phoenician merchants; glistening Nubians and shaggy Britons, soldiers and slaves.

Another rich noble wouldn't be noticed, unless he did something out of the ordinary. Joe drained his cup and decided he didn't feel like a noble. For one thing, he was too big. That was something the professor hadn't counted on, the difference in size.

Joe looked about him. The Romans were no more than middleweights, with a sprinkling of light-heavies among them. The only big men were Nubian slaves and Joe Rain. Maybe all the heavyweights were in the schools for gladiators, or in the arena.

Joe brought a gold piece out of his pouch and held it in his fingers. Professor Gibbons had some strange friends—including a few who could turn out perfect copies of a priceless Roman Solidus. Joe rang the coin on the table; the awed innkeeper brought him a double handful of silver coins in change.

The professor had been right again; hard money was scarce in the time of Tiberius. Joe stood up, tasting the young, virile air, seeing brighter colors, feeling a warmer sun. The excitement of it got to him and tingled along his spine.

He wandered along the twisted street and stared at everything—bloody meats hooked over a butcher's counter, the dark, quick juggler who spun flashing knives into the air.

Symbols clashed at a slave block, and Joe stopped there, entranced by the girl being pushed to the edge of the platform by her owner. She stood tight-faced and trembling as the man flung open her robe and called off the features of her body.

The slave merchant saw Joe and marked the richness of his tunic. He pressed the girl to her knees. "Feel.

noble sir—know for yourself that her breasts are firm, that these thighs are smooth. A bargain, sir, fresh from the campaigns in Gaul."

The girl was lovely, finely modeled and with fire in her. Joe shook his head. Dammit—young girls weren't cattle, to be pawed and inspected.

She spat at him. The merchant's outraged cry and the meaty slap of his hand against the girl's head rang out together.

"Sir!" Noble sir, forgive me. This barbarian needs a touch of the whip."

Joe wiped his face and looked back into the girl's blazing eyes. "How much?"

The merchant pursed bearded lips. "Five Solidus."

Joe shook his head.

"Expenses are high these days," the merchant said. "You wouldn't deny a poor man a small profit? Four Solidus, then."

The girl hissed and Joe grinned at her. "She's wild and untrained. I'll look elsewhere."

"Wait, a bargain, sir. Three Solidus—and I'm losing money."

Joe's grin spread wider. That same phrase had lived unchanged through many centuries. "She's too thin," he said. "One Solidus."

The girl struggled against the hand knotted in her hair. Her hands were bound behind her, and the sun glowed on the satiny planes of her bare body. "Roman dog!"

The trader yanked at her hair. "One goldpiece and forty silver."

She worked her head around and sank teeth into the man's forearm. Cursing, he flung her away. "All right—one Solidus, if you promise to beat her. I can get fifty silver for her at the arena, where lions will teach her how to bite."

Joe flipped the slaver a goldpiece, not quite certain why he had been drawn into haggling over the girl. Maybe it had been because she hadn't whimpered when the man slapped her; perhaps he liked the unbroken spirit plain within her.

"What's she called?" he asked, as the merchant drew the girl's robe together and slipped a leather thong around her neck.

The slaver handed Joe one end of the thong. "Lyric—and beat her often, sir."

Joe moved away from the slave block and paused. Now that he had the girl, what was he going to do with her? If he let her go in the marketplace, she'd soon be up for sale again. Romans didn't buy slaves just to release them.

A voice spoke behind them: "You are welcome to use my whips on her."

Joe turned to look into the patrician face of a woman smiling up at him from a litter chair. Four male slaves stood waiting at the carrying handles, and Joe saw the scars of lashes across their backs.

"I am Demonica," the woman said.

"Justun," Joe said, remembering the name and cover story the professor had drilled into him. "Vacationing from Macedonia."

"Ah," she said, and stretched a lush body. "I thought you were from the provinces. No Roman your size could have escaped my notice. I'll expect you tonight, at the small palace."

Joe blinked. "Tonight?"

Her lips were wanton scarlet poppies, and her hair the shade of midnight. "Of course; Demonica's invitation is an order."

She clapped her hands, and the bearers stooped to lift the litter. Demonica swayed off through the crowd without a backward glance.

Something clicked in Joe's mind. Demonica — favored concubine of the Emperor Tiberius, and a power behind the throne. No wonder she commanded; it would mean his head if he refused her.

The leather thong jerked against his

palm. "You forgot to bow to your mistress," Lyrice said.

Joe pulled her along the street, watching for a respectable-appearing inn, where he could get rid of her. Where the market stalls gave way to open spaces and gardens, he found a place. Legionnaire officers idled outside, centurions and a few tribunes.

He saw eyebrows lifted as he passed through them with the girl, and heard them whisper and laugh. Inside, the innkeeper bowed them to a room.

It was a level above the street, and bare except for the low, wide couch and a single table. Joe closed the door and slid its bar into place.

Lyrice stood quietly until Joe slipped the noose from her neck and untied her hands. Then she exploded into action, whirling away from him, gold-flecked eyes searching for a weapon. Finding none, she crouched with hooked fingers and waited.

"Easy," Joe said. "I won't harm you."

Her teeth flashed. "You won't even touch me!"

Joe sat down on the couch. "I don't intend to."

"I — I do not understand. You bought me —"

"To keep the merchant from beating you," Joe said.

"But —"

"You expected to be raped? The idea crossed my mind, but I have other things to do — and not much time."

Lyrice came closer. "You told that woman you came from Macedonia. It was a lie."

"What's the difference?" Joe leaned back on the couch, his hands behind his head. "You can go, now."

Her eyes widened. "Go? You mean I am free?"

Joe nodded and closed his eyes, trying to plan. Food, a bath, and a guide to the little palace of Tiberius, where he would be a guest at a Roman orgy. Later, he could drift away and keep out of sight until the time gateway appeared.

The girl's fingers touched his shoulder. "I said — are you freeing me?"

"Yes."

She sat down beside him. "I must have a scroll saying this. And I am far from Gaul, with no money and no protector."

"That's your problem."

"You bought me; I am your responsibility."

Joe sat up. "Wait a minute. I can't haul you around with me. Let's see — I have a lot of gold here. If you stay in this room until I come back, tonight, I'll give it to you. You can hire a ship to Gaul. All right?"

The girl's face crumpled around its edges and she buried her face in her hands.

"Hey," Joe said, and her head nestled against his shoulder. He let her cry, feeling the sobs rack her slim body.

When she lifted her tear-stained face, she said, "Now I am certain you are no Roman, Justun — if that is your name — what manner of man are you? You are gentle and — and strange, even frightening, somehow."

He brushed back her dark-gold hair with clumsy fingers. "You're a beautiful girl, Lyrice. It's true I'm no Roman. But if I explained what I am, you would be more frightened. You couldn't understand."

Her eyes were damp stars. "I understand this, Justun — your gold could not buy me, but your kindness did. Keep me, strange man. Do what you will with me."

Lyrice's mouth was close, an eager promise, but Joe moved away. "You don't have to do this. You don't have to buy your freedom this way."

"I do not buy," she murmured, "I give — gladly."

The touch of her body was primitive,

— turn to page 66

Adam



"See — there's another typical example of the nervous state we live in continually these days."

SKIN DIVING...



SINCE THE FIRST tree-living primitive hollowed out his first log dugout or put skins and bark together to make his first coracle, or clumsy canoe, men have gone down to the sea in ships. More latterly, as in the case of the guests at the late Earl Carroll's famous Broadway backstage party featuring a shapely show-girl in a tubful of champagne, men have gone down to the sea in sips. Even more latterly still, they have begun going down under the sea in their skins and fins, and taking their sips right along with them.

There are, of course, individuals here and there who move underwater for the purpose of spearing fish, for marine photography or for buried treasure, long lost beneath the briny. Such loafers and time-wasters are not the consideration of this study of the more noble aspects of skin-diving and its more character-building pursuits.

When we go skin-diving we are after real game and games in a submarine

version of the greatest, most universal sport of all — getting down to the sea, not in sips but in solid, quota-filling gulps. As in all other sports, there must be considered the matter of equipment, conditions abetting or detrimental to its successful consummation and the rules of the game for hunter and hunted alike (although there should be always a definite difference between them, which is, in a way, the crux of the whole idea — *vive la difference!*)

Equipment for our sort of skin-diving (and isn't it everyone's?) involves any number of paradoxes. Until hunters of both sexes began actually going *under* water instead of merely lounging together on the beach between occasional dips in the briny, this problem had virtually reached the vanishing point. Riviera-style trunks (for males) and Bikinis (for females) had just about eliminated the equipment needs entirely, a pleasing fact pointed pleasantly up on almost any beach almost any hot day.

When the great game went beneath the surface, however, in the interests of greater freedom, more privacy and increased elements of danger (real or supposed) to add piquancy to the sport, the equipment problem promptly loomed as large as it did in the early 1900's, when your Great-Aunt Tilly wouldn't dream of dunking her *avant-de-jour* minus bloomers, blouse, bustle and hip-length hose. Any number of the more adventurous pioneers in the newer form of the chase were unhappily surprised to find themselves inside Davy Jones' Locker, looking out. In short, unless they were incredibly adept and quick-reacting, they drowned without getting to first base, or even, in some pathetic case, out of the batter's box.

Before you could say Abercrombie and Fitch, enterprising manufacturers, fearing total loss of a potential market before it even existed, came to the fore with all sorts of gadgets to make skin-diving more palatable and less perilous.

For those who take their diving in the skin, here's ADAM's guide to underwater dalliance

Its Pursuit and Practice

by EARL PRATT

Goggles, masks, fins, snorkels, lungs, tanks, decompression chambers, air-compressors, abalone irons and underwater communications devices flooded the stores and made more and more beach-goers resemble the Beast from 20,000 Fathoms of horror-film fame.

It is easy (granting you have the scratch) to spend as much on this goodsome gobbley-gook as on a T-Bird or a mink coat or even on camera or hi-fi equipment. Costs can run to thousands of dollars. However, much of it is really cumbersome unless you are after fish or buried treasure, and much of this is the most expensive.

A pair of fins for the feet, a mask with enough air for 15 minutes or so, some water to dive in, a quarry, and you're in business. You'll need the fins to operate in, and you'll need the water because you'd look pretty damn silly wearing this sort of guck and chasing a girl on dry land, now wouldn't you? Spears, of course, are optional, depending on whether you wish to stab or merely frolic with your quarry. As for abalone irons, they are of small avail save for the dull-witted

types who are forever at a loss for the retort sharp (or sharp retort). And even the well-tested comeback "Abalone!" has definitely seen better days.

More cautious souls may find it comforting to practice in the nearest swimming pool available (deep end, of course), but unless absolute privacy is assured, clear pool water, reflecting tile bottoms and the usual proximity of people make this practice seldom better than a dry run. In general, authorities feel that the best introduction is by doing it yourself and devil take the hindmost. In short, get into the sink. Remember, you aren't supposed to swim.

As for those underwater decompression devices, don't bother with them. If you need a gadget to get your message through, you've had it before you've begun, bub. Besides, who goes skin-diving to talk or listen? What you want is action, and the faster the better.

One piece of equipment sorely needed at present, a piece that has thus far eluded the gadget wizardry of the manufacturers, is a hook-peeler, guaranteed to remove a Bikini without re-



moving bits and pieces of the she beneath, thus putting her in an eminently unamorous state of body and mind. One of these days, the boys will come up with such a device, but until then the old-fashioned methods remain the tried-and-true best.

Having your equipment, including the water, all you need is good weather and a suitable quarry (or quarries). Usually, you won't have to look far for the latter these days, as they crowd the beaches with regularity, their cute little fins aquiver in anticipation of the chase and capture.

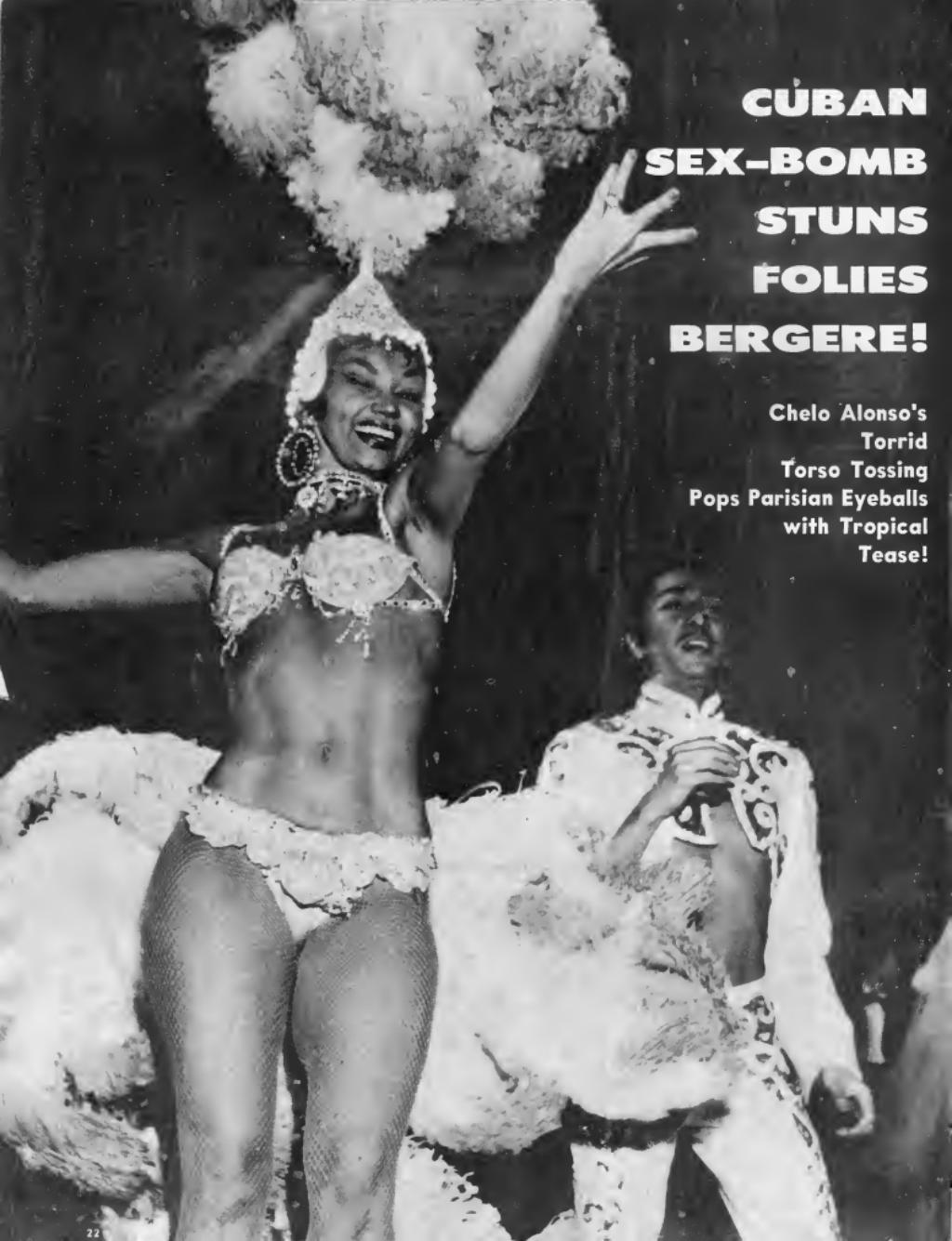
One of the chief beauties of skin-diving (or the skin-game as its habitués often term it) is the fact that, should a quarry prove vindictive or possessive after capture, there are mighty few chances of her being able to prove the capture in court. It is, from this point of view, a lot safer than the average motel.

Yet, hazards do exist. A soft bottom scratched by barnacles or rough coral can prove exceedingly painful. Also, the veteran skin-diver must always be on the lookout for sharks, electric eels, octopi (once one of these eight-armed monsters has embraced a quarry, you're on the outside looking in, bub!) and wolves.

Yes, there are plenty of wolves operating beside, upon and under the water these days, and they can snake a quarry away from a hopeful hunter like a thief in the night.

One further word of caution — don't become so wrapped up in the game that you forget to notice your air-supply is running out. If you do, instead of Debussy, it's the "Death March" from "Saul". But this is an unlikely contingency, and even if it should happen to you, do you know of a better way to go?





**CUBAN
SEX-BOMB
STUNS
FOLIES
BERGERE!**

**Chelo Alonso's
Torrid
Torso Tossing
Pops Parisian Eyeballs
with Tropical
Tease!**



THE MOST SENSATIONAL dancer to score a triumph in decades at that birthplace and home of sensational dances called the Folies Bergere is a 22-year-old Cuban divorcee who calls herself Chelo Alonso. Tourists and natives alike vow they have seen nothing to compare with Chelo on the famous stage since Harlem-born Josephine Baker appeared in a bunch of bananas and ate most of her costume for a midnight snack.

• Such verve, such dynamite, such brilliance, such woman! — such is the cry of Chelo's audiences as she twists and writhes and bumps her way through a routine that leaves fellow performers and paying customers limp. Add to this expertise a sultry, exotic, slant-eyed-siren's face and one of the most provocative bodies since Cleopatra bloomed on the Nile, and Chelo's triumph becomes clear as crystal and a whole lot more exciting.

• Chelo's real-life story is as romantic and exciting as her onstage offerings. She was born Isabel Garcia in Cuba, and has been dancing ever since she could walk. In fact, so infatuated was she with the ritual and voodoo dances of her native island that she became something of a problem child to her mother, who used to slap her and forbid her to dance until she had finished her school homework.

• But Isabel-Chelo has the stubbornness of a dedicated soul, and she refused to give up her first love. Physically mature (Cuba's a hot climate, remember?) at 16, mother married her off to the director of the local newspaper, who had fallen madly in love with the ravishing miss. He permitted her to go on with her





dancing, but refused to let her make professional appearances.

- Result — one very early divorce and Chelo's embarkation on what became literally a round-the-world dancing tour. She scored sensational, first in Havana, then in South America, then across Asia, North Africa and Europe, until she reached Paris and the Folies Bergere, where she was promptly labeled the "Cuban H-Bomb!"

- Last year, she made front-page news in Europe via an engagement to dark, handsome Prince Abdul Rahman, son of India's Sultan of Johore, who literally showered her with furs and jewels. However, his family refused to let him marry her as long as she danced in public, and Chelo's well-formed stubbornness in that department rose once more. In her own words, "If I cannot dance, I am dead — so I had to break the engagement."

- Outside of dancing and romance, sultry Chelo's passion is for music. Her favorite in this department is none other than Harry Belafonte, and she has all of his records to date and plays them for hours on end. All in all, it is quite obvious that Cuba's loss is very much Paris' gain!





Hovering in the shadow of evil, they plotted the most diabolical murder in the Arizona Territory

the MASS of ST. SECAIRE

by DEVEREAUX WILLIAMS

IT WAS JIM FOWLER who pronounced the doom of Jose Echtavirre, there in Paddy's ramshackle saloon. "By God!" he exclaimed. "This time the bastard has gone too far! He's got to be stopped."

The hour was just after 9 o'clock, the date was July 6, 1892, and Paddy's Saloon, like everything else in that portion of Arizona Territory, was sweating, stinking, staggering hot. The three men who sat around the big round table in the rear of the saloon, under the stairway to the rooms upstairs, were there because the thought of lying on a bed and seeking sleep was unbearable.

They were men of different cut, every one, representing the wild variety of humanae who could be found in the West at that time, either in search of a future or in refuge from a past. If there was camaraderie among them, it was the camaraderie of chance rather than of mutual interest or shared background. Yet chance, which had brought them together, was in process of forging among them bonds of anger, of action and of guilt that only death would dissolve.

Consider their difference. There was Fowler, the rough, bluff cattleman, who could score a bullseye at twenty feet with his ever-present blend of tobacco and spit, either on the eye of a spittoon or the somewhat smaller eye of a rattlesnake. A man of limited intellect and limited education, he was likewise a man of limited beliefs. Within these, he was rough, hearty, kindly—yet, like all primitives, capable of cruelty when frightened by an encroachment upon his beliefs.

There was Dr. Macrobious, a wanderer from no one knew where, headed for an equally veiled destination—long-faced, cynical, deadly with cards or tongue, a man of exceptional education and interests and of no beliefs at all.

—turn the page

Dr. Mac could barely make out the ghostly form.





Hardly handsome, he suggested a world-wearied elegance, even when soaked through with sweat, that the women of Skinner's Ridge found irresistible.

Now, Dr. Mac glanced with characteristic obliquity at Jim Fowler and said, "It is all very well to say Jose must be stopped—but how do you intend doing it?"

In the silence that followed this pertinent question, Don Pedro Gomez y Altadilla thoughtfully stroked the ebullience of his full, greying mustache. Here, too, was elegance, the silver-studded and chased-leather elegance of the one-time Spanish colonial grandee, the frontier aristocrat whose decaying holdings had been pumped to new life by the mere fact that he had held onto them until the cattle-boom began.

He said, quietly, softly, in his heavy accent, "In the old days, when we met a common sheepman, we did not hesitate. Either he left with his flock or he fed the vultures while his sheep fed us."

There was another pause, as Maria swept down on the table, tray on hip, to pick up the empty glasses and convey them to the bar for a refill. "Your wish, senores?" she inquired in liquid tones, overladen with the sharp, nasal spice of some senoritas.

Dr. Mac, whose turn to buy it was, indicated another round, and Maria swayed back toward the bar, her rounded hips, tightly swathed in silk, offered a moving invitation to all males under eighty. But when Jim Fowler turned back to his companions after regarding this pleasant phenomenon, his words were not of her hips. He

said, "Even Maria must be feeling the heat. Those dark rings under her eyes . . ." Fowler was fresh off the range that afternoon, and was just catching up on affairs at Skinner's Ridge.

Dr. Mac shrugged and smiled his cynical smile. He said, "You might look tired yourself, Jim, if you had borne a baby within the week and had been fighting ever since to keep it alive."

"I've forgotten," said Fowler sheepishly. "Maria was kinda plump when I took off three weeks back."

"Maria," said Don Pedro, "was pregnant."

"Jose?" the cattleman asked. And, when the others nodded, "That's the third time, ain't it?"

"Right," said Dr. Mac.

"All dead?" Fowler asked.

"All dead," replied Macrobius. "In fact, the infant died this morning."

"How does she do it?" the cattleman asked, marveling.

"These Basque women are tough," said Don Pedro, shaking his head slowly, a gesture which caused the ends of his luxuriant mustache to send little globules of sweat flying east and west of where he sat. "They are even tougher than the Indian women."

There was another pause, while Maria put the drinks in front of them and picked up the silver dollar Dr. Mac tossed onto her tray as a tip. Then Fowler said slowly to Don Pedro, "And right on top of this, that bastard Joe Echavirre has the almighty gall to ask your daughter to marry him?"

Don Pedro nodded. He said quietly, "It would seem he wishes to plant his seed in the New World. Maria has failed him."

"What did Donna Inez tell him?" Fowler asked.

"The correct thing," replied Don Pedro. "She told him he must inquire of me."

"I'll be God damned!" said Fowler. "This calls for fast action." His hand went to his side, where a six-shooter usually hung in its holster, a weapon currently hanging behind the bar with others of its ilk, in accord with the well-enforced regulations of Paddy's Saloon where firearms were concerned.

"Does it occur to you, Jim," said Dr. Mac with another oblique look at the cattleman, "that this would be Don Pedro's personal problem?"

"By God!" said the rancher, slamming a fist on the table to make the glasses jump and stop over. "Jose Echavirre is everybody's problem. He's poisoning the whole territory!"

There was a stir along the bar at that moment, and the swinging doors of the saloon were abruptly thrust open. A

short, stocky figure, colorful in black-and-silver pants and jacket, white ruffled shirt and scarlet neckerchief, stood there. He removed a broad straw hat, whose curled up brim tinkled musically with silver bells, smiled at the saloon in general, then moved with a suggestion of compact, dynamic grace toward the round table in the rear where Dr. Mac and Don Pedro sat.

"Did I hear my name?" he inquired in accents heavier and less determinable than those of the son of the grandees. Ignoring the lack of response, he added, "Your beautiful daughter tells me to come see you, Don Pedro—so I come. May I have the privilege of talking to you alone, señor?"

"These are my friends," Don Pedro gestured at his companions. "You may speak before them."

For an instant, Joe Echavirre's dark eyes flickered toward Maria, who leaned in apparent relaxation against the service end of the bar. Then, turning his attention back to Don Pedro, he bowed low and said, speaking rapidly as if he were afraid of being interrupted before he could finish, "I, Jose Echavirre, being of sufficient fortune and health, and having great love for her, request the permission of the hand in marriage of your daughter, Donna Inez Scrafina Gomez y Alvarez in holy and legal matrimony."

Jim Fowler tensed as if about to spring up from his chair and annihilate the impudent suitor—but a surprisingly muscular hand laid on his shoulder by Dr. Macrobius held him in his place. Don Pedro regarded Jose for an instant with glittering, unveiled malevolence—which was quickly replaced by his habitual expression of polite gravity. He said, "I am grateful for your offer, Señor Echaverra, and I shall take it under advisement. But, I warn you, do not raise your hopes too high. I fear my daughter may have other plans."

"It is enough," said Jose. He bowed once more and, without another look at Maria or anyone else in the silent saloon, he strode back out into the night.

"I'd have shot him where he stood, the bastard," said Fowler.

With a rueful smile, Don Pedro spread his hands. "With what?" he asked. His gaze darted to the pegs on the wall behind the bar where the weapons hung.

"You aren't going to let him have Donna Inez?" Fowler asked incredulously.

"Not while I live," replied Don Pedro gravely.

"He's got to be stopped!" snapped Fowler furiously. "It's bad enough, a sheepman taking the hold he has

Adam



"You'll be happy to learn that I don't have one red cent for the rent."

around here. But asking for Donna Inez . . . !" Indignation choked him.

"Have you asked for her hand?" Dr. Mac inquired trenchantly, well knowing that the cattleman's inbred prejudice against "greasers" had forbade his making such a request. Then, before the ironic query could promote dissension among them, "No, gentlemen, I fear we are faced with a problem, in Jose Echtaivre, that may prove difficult to answer."

"I fear we must find an answer," said Don Pedro, his face as wrinkled as a prune.

Indeed, the problem of Jose Echtaivre was, as far as any of them knew, unique, at least in the West of 1892. It was only within the last few years that even the most enlightened cattlemen were beginning to accept the presence of sheep on the open range without burning or shooting on sight. The fact that few North Americans could endure the hardship and loneliness that were part of the sheepherder's way of life, did little to add to the prestige of this lesser breed of livestock.

The Basques, of course, were the answer. An isolated remnant of a long-lost European tribal migration whose origins were lost in the mists of pre-history, the Basques, by their toughness and the mountainous toughness of their land, on the Bay of Biscay athwart the western slopes of the Pyrenees, had somehow survived. They were born sheepmen, who laughed at extremes of heat and cold as they ignored loneliness. Speaking their own tongue, dedicated to their own ancient customs, they were accustomed to isolation in an alien world. So Basque shepherds were imported to Arizona to tend the growing flocks of sheep.

For the most part, they served out their contracted-for years on the range, drew their pay and returned home as rich men to their impoverished native land, there to marry the prettiest girls and build the sturdiest houses and sit out their remaining decades sipping wine and arguing the merits of their favorite jai alai players. Since they did their work well and bothered no one, they were accepted as a necessary part of the Western scene.

But not Jose Echtaivre. When he had served his time and made his pile, he chose not to return home, but elected to remain in his adopted land, to purchase sheep himself and hire other Basques to tend them for him. In a few short years, he had become rich even by American standards, and was well on his way to becoming richer still. Since newly imported Basques preferred doing business with and serving one of their own people, he got the

pick of the herdsmen, and knowing their needs he treated them well. He was fast becoming a power in that vast area of Arizona Territory that centered upon the dusty, false-front little town of Skinner's Ridge.

He had stock, he had money, he had a fiercely devoted set of followers. When first he courted Maria Aguirre, Yankee comment had been a blend of amusement and relief. Maria's father was Basque, her mother half Mexican and half Indian. It was expected that, when she bore him a child, they would get married. But the child had been stillborn, as was the second. Now, the third had died mere days after birth, and Jose Echtaivre had openly proclaimed himself in the market for a new and more biologically efficient bride — Don Pedro's daughter, Donna Inez, long the pampered target of caballeros and cultured citizens.

It was not to be endured. This Basque, this sheepman, this upstart, must be stopped, and stopped for keeps. There was only one question remaining — how?

The three companions sat late around the round table in Paddy's Saloon that unbearably hot July night, drinking, thinking, occasionally offering suggestions that were quickly turned down. Direct assassination was out of the question, as it would inevitably bring war between cattle and sheepmen that neither could afford.

It was Maria, her black eyes burning in her beautiful, haggard face, who rounded out the details of this urgency. Serving her final round of the evening, she blazed forth, to Don Pedro, "Senor, think well before you let your beautiful daughter marry

this man. You think it is I who am sick, who am unable to carry his children. Maybe — but I was not sick until I let Jose have me. It is he who is sick, with the sickness of the cities. It is he who causes my body to fail!"

When the wretched girl had gone, the other two regarded Dr. Macrobious quizzically. "Is it true, Doc?" Jim Fowler asked.

Dr. Mac, who served both as veterinarian and general practitioner for the area, sighed. "Since the cat is out of the bag," he said, "the answer is both yes and no."

"Now, what kind of talk is that, Doc?" the battleman asked.

"Put it this way," said Dr. Mac, "Jose was in pretty bad shape when I first got here. You remember, he went on a trip not long afterward. I sent him to St. Louis to be cured. And I've been treating Maria, poor soul, though I'm afraid it's too late to do much good where her child-bearing is concerned."

"The son-of-a-bitch!" said Fowler. "What in hell are we going to do about him?"

Paddy O'Gorman, florid, genial, fiftyish, came over, carrying a bottle and his own glass. The other customers had departed for their sweaty palls, and he was joining the party, if party was exactly the name for the gathering. After pouring a round and sharing in it, he rested his elbows on the table and looked first at Fowler, then at Don Pedro, then, more particularly, at Dr. Macrobious.

"Dr. Mac," he said, "I've been thinking you'll be knowing a way out of this problem — you'll pardon me, gentlemen, but I could not help over-

— turn to page 62

Adam





MODEL MEETS FAWN



Pretty Pat Conley
Makes Pet of Shy
Woodland Creature

WHEN A GIRL is as spectacularly beautiful as Ozark-born Pat Conley, and has her luscious charms as spectacularly on display, it is hardly surprising that all sorts of men should fawn upon her wherever she goes. More surprising is the fact that such are Pat's warm good nature and farm-bred way with animals that, when she goes to the woods, even that shyest of forest creatures, a fawn, should do likewise.

• Pat, who has been a busy creature herself this past year, what with her many modeling assignments and a showgirl stint at the Dunes in Las Vegas, is currently appearing in a motion picture entitled "The Naked Venus", and since type-casting still prevails in Hollywood, she, of course, won the title role. She plays the part of a Parisian who runs away from her problems by coming to the U.S. and joining a nudist colony. How delightful!





MARKET FOR MURDER

WHEN I GOT to the office, Dana was sitting primly behind her desk, opening the mail and looking disgustingly clear-eyed and healthy. Also, disgustingly blonde and beautiful in a backless summer dress that revealed a heaven's half-acre of satin, suntanned flesh with firm, full curves in all the right places.

Pinning me to the wall with a stern and level-eyed gaze, she intoned sweetly, "Good morning, boss. I was rather hoping you'd turn up today. What happened to you yesterday? You could have called."

"Oh, no I couldn't," I retorted with less wit than spirit — and damned little of that. I was tempted to tell her how I'd spent the day — flat on my back in a dreadful redhead packing age's diggings down by Redondo Beach. Since it was Dana's continued denial of me that had got me started on the wingding, I thought she had it coming. But on second thought, confession would merely put me further on the red-ink side of Dana's ledger.

I made a dive for the bottom file in the cabinet between the windows — the one marked *Miscellaneous*. The bottle of Scotch was still there, but about half its contents had disappeared. I held it up against the window to make sure and asked how come.

"Sergeant Fellowes was in yesterday afternoon," Dana volunteered.

"Oh . . . ?" I went over to the water-cooler and managed myself a life-saving shot. "What did he want?"

"He didn't say," she replied. "Oh — he suggested I go to Tijuana with him Sunday to see the bullfights."

"Fine friend," I said. "When do you leave?"

"Friday night — if I go," she replied. "I must say, I'm tempted."

"With Tim Fellowes?" I asked with all the scorn I could muster in my deplorable condition. The Scotch was doing its work inside me, making me feel at least a quarter-human.

"Why not?" Dana countered. But her attention was no longer on me. It was focused on a long, white envelope she had just opened. She had removed a folded sheet of plain white paper and was looking at it as if it held death — or diamonds.

"Boss," she said in a half-strangled little voice. "Boss," she said, "what have you really been doing?"

"If I told you, you'd hate me worse than you do," I replied, still trying to play it light.

"I don't hate you," she replied. "On the contrary, I think you're a pretty nice guy — or at least I did."

—turn the page

A dead redhead and five thousand in pay-off money turned his hangover into a living nightmare

*The place was a shambles with
Vonnie sprawled across the bed.*



MARKET, from page 32

"For Christ's sake!" I said. "What's eating you, honey?"

"This," she said, pushing the piece of paper toward me across her desk.

It was my turn to freeze. On the paper was a brief, poorly typed note. It read—

Dear Peter Brush:

Thanks for fulfilling your part of our agreement so promptly and efficiently. I am fulfilling my part as promptly.

It was unsigned. But it wasn't the note itself that got me—it was the five crisp \$1,000 bills that someone, presumably the amateur typist, had placed within it.

I didn't have to look at Dana to know what she was thinking—there's only one job a guy in my business can do that rates a five-grand payment in cash. Yet, as far as I knew, I had yet to commit a murder. Not that I haven't wanted to—you can't deal with all the screwballs and heels a Hollywood private eye draws and not want to rub one of them out occasionally. But it's bad for business. The cops don't go for it, and without police cooperation, or at least police tolerance, operatives like me can't operate very long.

"So help me!" I told Dana. "I was framed—I wasn't there—I got an alibi." But all the same, there was a large knot of worry under my diaphragm. Outside of yesterday, I'd pretty well lost

the weekend.

"Somebody sure thinks you did something," said Dana quietly.

"Maybe it's a gag," I said hopefully. "Maybe it's counterfeit dough."

"Remember where you found me?" Dana asked rhetorically. I remembered—I had found her working a teller's cage in the Sunset-Wetherly Branch of the Bank of America. She could spot a bogus bill faster than a T-man with a microscope.

I counted the bills again. There were still five of them—nice and crisp and new and—worth \$1,000, every one. I should have felt happy, but I was scared. I said, "I'm going down to the bank and put them in the deposit-box until I find out what's what."

"Not today, you're not," said Dana. And, as I looked at her in astonishment, "The banks are closed—it's Admission Day."

Not being a native son, Admission Day is one California holiday I'd forgotten. It celebrates the state's entry into the Union, and banks and state offices of all kinds close up and go fishing. I put four of the bills in my wallet and laid the other in front of Dana. "Have one on me," I said.

"I'd rather not," she replied, pushing it back toward me. "Not until I know what you got it for."

"So help me . . ." I began again, but the blue steel in her eyes closed me up like a giant clam. I said, "Sit on things at this end, honey, while I do some digging. I'm as curious as you are."

Dana didn't say anything, so I got out of there fast. I'd have been smarter to have stuck around and used the phone, but Dana's disapproval was too much for my already inflated moral hangover. I got into my convertible, noting the new dent in the left side, and wondered what in hell to do. The only lead I could think of was the Redondo redhead. I'd waked up in her bed, stinking, yesterday afternoon. I still didn't know where or when or how I'd picked her up, but there was a chance she might know something. Thinking of her, in my present sated condition, made my flesh creep, but like I said, I was scared. Those five big bills in my wallet were weighing me down.

It was a perfect early-September day, sunswept, warm and miraculously free of smog. But I didn't enjoy the drive. Somewhere, in the alcoholic fog of the weekend just past, plus the Monday and Tuesday of my incapacitation, I'd made a deal with somebody—a deal supposedly consummated to the tune of five thousand fish. And I couldn't remember a cotton-picking thing about it. My alleged brain was washed as clean as a high-school blackboard, from sometime late Saturday night until my awakening the afternoon before.

I drove on down to Redondo Beach, which is not exactly a swank community, at least not where I was heading. My redhead's name was Vonnie Henson, a half-Irish Swede by extraction, and a pig any way you looked at her.

The fact Vonnie had been dead for some time by my arrival didn't do anything for her. I banged on the door of her \$60-a-month, one-room-bath-and-kitchenette furnished apartment, and when she didn't answer, I pushed on the door and it was open.

The place was a shambles. It hadn't been especially neat when I left her, some three hours earlier, but since then the monsoon had struck it. Drawers had been dumped and ransacked, the mattress and chair and sofa cushions ripped open, the carpet pulled up and piled in a corner.

Vonnie Henson lay on top of the carpet, with her tongue sticking out and her eyes wide open and purple marks on her throat. She still had on the crummy pink nylon shortie she'd been in and out of with me, and it was up around her breasts, which were as exposed as the rest of her. She was not only dead, she was beginning to come apart at the seams, which, coupled with my already queasy condition, didn't make me want to linger. I didn't—I got out of there in a hurry.

Halfway back to town, I had a thought, or perhaps a memory jog out of the weekend fog. I pulled over to the side of the highway and unlocked

Adam



my glove compartment — only it didn't need unlocking. Since I never leave it open, this was a nasty jag. Almost before I got my gun out, I knew what to expect. It had been used, and not too long since. I slammed it back where it belonged and made sure the compartment was locked.

By this time, I had managed to get the idea I was in trouble, *and* in carload lots. The main trouble with my trouble was that I didn't know what in hell it was all about. But I had a powerful hunch. I'd better begin finding out — and quick! — before someone else found out for me. Apparently, I hadn't been kidding when I'd yelled to Dana I'd been framed. If I hadn't been, I was well on the way to getting there.

By the time I got back to my place on the Strip, it was close to 5 o'clock. I figured I'd better get Dana packing and out of the mess. Unfortunately, she was already in it. Redondo Beach hadn't been the only scene of activity that afternoon.

Dana was behind her desk, looking as if she had been sick as a dog. And that thick-necked Lothario of the Los Angeles Homicide Bureau, Sergeant Tim Fellowes, was sitting across from her, making free with the remnants of my Scotch.

The office bore a close resemblance to my most recent view of poor Vonnies Henson's apartment. It had been sacked as well as ransacked. Files had been ruthlessly opened and their contents strewn about the floor. The desk drawers had suffered a similar fate. Nor was my sense of well-being improved when I saw that Dana's sunburned throat bore livid marks similar to those I had seen on a similar portion of the dead red-head's anatomy.

"What the hell's going on?" I asked. "Peter!" croaked Dana hoarsely.

"Where've *you* been?" Sergeant Fellowes growled. "If I hadn't dropped by when I did, you'd have been out one secretary."

"Who did it?" I asked.

Fellowes had the grace to blush. It took a little putting together, with Dana hardly able to talk and my Homicide friend not wanting to discuss certain aspects of it, but I finally got the story. About 90 minutes earlier, a character wearing a woman's stocking over his head had come in, knocked Dana down and bound and gagged her, then begun taking the office apart. Then he had untied Dana's gag and begun choking her and letting up to ask her where the dough was stashed. Fellowes had wandered in to follow up his Tijuana pitch with Dana (or so I surmised), had caught the thief in the act and shot him dead.

"The crazy thing is," croaked Dana,

rolling her big blue eyes, "like I told Tim, I don't know what dough he was talking about."

I blessed her with a blink for keeping her sweet little mouth shut about the five gees that were burning an ever-hotter hole in my pocket. Then I said, "Where's the stuff?"

"He just took a ride in the meat wagon," said Fellowes. "By his papers, his name was Kazar — Lucilio Kazar. He was a waiter when he worked. We're checking up now Downtown. Do you read it?"

"What did he look like?" I asked.

"Nothing much, Pete," said Fellowes. "One of these small-to-middling, blue-chinned characters with dark, wavy hair. Oh, yeah — and he had a small, circular scar in his left cheek. Might have been made by a bullet, five-ten years ago."

I shook my head. But the description rang like a dim and distant gong inside me. A little dark character with a circular scar on his left cheek. There had been a man like that somewhere in my recent past. The clouds shutting off memory of my lost weekend opened just a little. But not enough — not yet.

I waited until big-ox Fellowes finished my Scotch and lumbered out, unuttered threats and promises in his eyes regarding my operative's license. Maybe my frame-artist was dead, but the frame could well live on, especially after they found my Redondo redhead's body and hooked it up with the assault on Dana, which they were sure to do.

I told Dana, "I'm taking you home,

doll. You've been through enough wringer for any one doll in any one day."

She shook her head, and her lower lip protruded. She said, still in her post-strangle croak, "I'm okay, Peter — really I am. I'm not going home until you tell me what this whole stinking mess is all about."

"Well," I said, "let's get out of this slaughterhouse, anyway." I was beginning to get the germ of an idea. Tim Fellowes' description of the little dark man with the scarred cheek had opened up something else.

Ordinarily, getting a drink into Dana was like getting a Size Twelve foot into a Size Nine shoe. But she let me take her to a joint down the Strip called the "Queen and Pawn" and buy her a nice fresh Scotch. Then she said, in her travesty of a voice, "Now, Peter — talk. I think I have a right to know."

"You can know all I do," I told her, "which ain't much. When I left this afternoon, I went down to revisit a redhead in Redondo Beach I left to come to the office. Now don't blow your stack, doll — I don't know where I picked her up, and I wouldn't have let it happen if you'd been more — accommodating. But —"

"I'm not the least bit interested in your undoubtedly sordid sex-life," she said, her nose high in the air. "Honestly, Peter, when I've been almost killed in your behalf, I should think you'd at least try to —"

It was my turn to interrupt. "You'll — turn to page 54



"Frankly, Mr. Howard, I don't like the way things are handled around here!"



muscle beach model

Lush Brunette
Adds Glamour to Famed
Santa Monica Resort





WHEN YOU LOOK at the fabulous curves and hollows of Hollywood model Gigi Frost for the first time, your reaction, after the initial *zowie* is apt to be, "How feminine can one girl get?" However, when you see her casually hefting 50-pound gymnasium weights from the back of her car, you begin to wonder if Gigi isn't practicing up to be Tarzan's next wife.

• Actually, 22-year-old Gigi is both ultra-feminine and ultra-strong. Don't let the apparent softness of Gigi's delectable 40-23-37 body fool you.

This gal is female, every cubic inch of her 125 pounds spread so enchantingly over a five-foot-five inch frame, but she is also an excellent athlete, who swims like a fish, plays tournament tennis and shoots golf in the low 80's.

• Furthermore, Gigi is nobody's fool. She has forsaken acting and modeling ambitions in favor of a career teaching Sociology, a subject in which she is currently immersed at a leading Southern California university.

Somehow, it seems a pity — the prospect of all that fine, full, lush loveliness being wasted in a schoolroom on a bunch of gawky kids! But that, incredible as it seems, is how this particular cookie crumbles.





- If this notable list of accomplishments alarms you, don't let it. Actually, Gigi is as outgoing, warm and friendly as her first name, traits she here reveals as she romps on the Muscle Beach sands with a husky young male companion, who is luckier than he can possibly know. She hales originally from New York City, and has lived in Los Angeles for about five years, with her parents.
- What else? Well, Gigi smokes, likes "food, any food", drinks scotch and sleeps raw. When it comes to men, she is definitely for them. In the little matter of sex, she offers an enigmatic but smiling, "That depends." Essentially, this is one girl who gets a great charge out of living to the full. "Experiences?" she counters. "Just about what any model can expect" — whatever that is. Her most important moment to date? — "When I was born."





WITCHCRAFT, from page 15

this odd plant for erotic or other stimulation has been largely decried as sheer superstition, its worship being charged to its resemblance, crudely, to a primitive, miniature human form. However, more recent and less biased experiments have revealed that, in certain forms, the mandrake is a most potent drug. Mixed with other ingredients into a salve and rubbed on the skin, it produces a definite narcotic effect, including trancelike states in which the user seems to be sailing through the air with every conviction of reality.

It does not seem impossible that less detached and literal minds than Mr. Wasson's might well be overwhelmed by visions and the sensations of flight, so much so as to lose awareness of their earth-bound bodies. Certain it is, that many so-called witches of yore indulged in mushrooms or mandrake ointment to obtain the sensation of flight. As for the broomstick tradition, well, it seems to stem from the fact that the osier, or willow branch, from which primitive brooms in Europe were generally cut, had an important role, like the poplar, hazel and mandrake, in the rituals of magic.

As for the aphrodisiac effect of the mandrake, we can look again to the old testament, in which Leah ate openly of the root to become pregnant by Reuben. Pliny, Lucian, Galen and Isidorus, among famed ancient scientists, speak of its stimulative or narcotic qualities, and a 13th century French chronicle describes the remarkable effect of this drug on a couple of amorous elephants, with forest-shaking results.

As for the debaucheries supposedly indulged in at witches' meetings, it seems, in spite of a centuries-long smear campaign against the Magic Empire, that there was a good deal of truth in the accusations of the orthodox. In the first place, the so-called Sabbats or revels were survivals of pre-Christian, perhaps prehistoric festivals, most of which were basically fertility rites. In the second place, during the late Middle Ages and Renaissance, those who indulged in witchcraft were for the most part persons in revolt against the organized church, hence persons who flouted its ordinances of virtue as not only a pleasure but a duty.

Having taken their ointment of man-

dake in powder form, mixed with belladonna, hemlock or aconite in proportions planned to excite but not kill, they were ready for anything—and, once ritual was concluded, anything and everything went.

In general, witches were organized in covens (groups) of 12, headed by a wizard or warlock to bring the total to the magic 13—an inversion of Christ and the 12 Apostles.

During the 17th century, the Earl of Bothwell, the free-wheeling Scottish Lord whose marriage to Queen Mary of Scotland proved so disastrous to her, was head warlock of a whole network of witches' covens. So great was his power that, though he twice attempted to poison his monarch, James VI (James I of England), and made no bones about it, the king dared not lift a finger against Bothwell.

For all of the anti-Christian trappings witchcraft acquired under orthodox persecution, as a religion, it was a survivor of mankind's dawn. Not only were its original roots in the pagan beliefs of the ancient Greeks and Romans, but, both through them and the Druidic faith of the northern forests, stretched back far earlier to the primitive faiths of the early men who migrated out of the highlands of central Asia long before Homer sang of Troy.

Since the Ancient world was composed of a vast variety of religions, there was not much persecution, although the human-sacrifice customs of the Druids filled the Romans with horror and brought about swift if inefficient legal action. It was the Christian faith that started the trouble, with its appeal to the suffering common man through promise of reward in an afterlife. This seemed worse than communism to followers of Zeus, Hera, Wotan and Mithra, who turned against the new religion viciously.

But Christianity, having survived and conquered Roman persecution, became in turn a resented temporal ruler. A man named Mani, or Manichaeus, came out of Persia to preach a new doctrine through Europe and Asia Minor in the Third Century A.D. His belief was easily grasped by an ignorant populace reduced to a state of resentful confusion by the schisms and heresies then plaguing the church. It suggested merely that the universe was composed of two forces, those of darkness and those of light, and that the struggle between them was neverending.

Although Mani was boiled in oil back in Persia, his doctrine, called the Manichaean Dualism, caught hold amazingly, and picked up the still defiant remnants of the earlier pagan religions, which it assimilated, as it later

assimilated Christian rites in reverse.

Not until the year 1484, did the church launch a major campaign against the dark religion, a campaign during which perhaps 200,000 people died by burning, drowning or hanging or torture as warlocks and witches. Their deaths ranged all the way from Eastern Europe to Salem, Massachusetts, where 10 witches were hanged or put to death in 1694, and one unfortunate pressed to death beneath a flat, heavy stone.

Yet, not until the turn of the present century did the mid-summer fires cease burning in remote parts of Europe, and hex-signs are still visible upon Pennsylvania barns today. It is small wonder then, considering the stubbornness of this ancient foe, that the campaign has never actually ceased, although it has been channeled to make of witchcraft largely a fun-thing fit for children's play on Mayday or Halloween.

However, along with things sinful in Orthodox eyes, much that was good or useful to mankind was destroyed in the war against the Magic Empire. And today, with its ever-widening horizon of curiosity and research, science, which is perhaps an even deadlier weapon of magic than any religion can ever be, is delving into once-forbidden rites and properties with an eye to discovering just what was helpful to man in the old pagan knowledge.

That such knowledge is exciting, has been proven both by author Huxley and by banker Wasson—the prospect of brilliant entertainment produced from man's own mind directly, rather than by watching a screen or live drama, for the price of a couple of mushrooms, is alluring. Even more alluring to some, are the freedoms from inhibition and limiting thought habits it promises.

But that these ancient drugs are dangerous unless indulged in either under the careful old rituals or the watchful eye of modern scientific knowledge is revealed all too tragically by the case of Michael Hawks, the young bio-chemistry student at the University of Redlands. He took the daring road of the innovator in magic and witchcraft before being sufficiently trained, and paid for his daring with his life.

For most of the rest of us, witches are something to derive a pleasant shudder from while walking home alone under an October moon. But for science, witchcraft's discoveries, carefully hoarded down through the ages, may open whole new vistas in anesthesia and in treating the hopelessly insane.



BLUES,
from page 6

and give her a squeeze as I do it, right where her curves bulge the most, and she does a little rumba of pleasure.

She says, "Evan, who wants to go out, when the fun and games are all right here in the apartment? Let's all save a lot of money: Come on, Joe-honey, let's get punching!"

So help me, Lori starts dragging me toward the bedroom. Sally lets out a squawk and looks like a stricken doe. Evan makes a move to block progress, but Lori just stares him down. "If you've got any ideas, Evan," she says coldly, "you're just a bit late. I've been here four days, and nothing's happened."

"But you can't!" yelps Evan. "After what you told me the other night."

"The hell I can't!" says Lori. She clamps a fresh hold on me, and away we go. By this time I don't even know whether I'm embarrassed or not. We march into the spare bedroom arm in arm, and she shuts the door firmly behind us. I begin to get the play, or think I do — she's out to make Evan jealous, just the way Sally wanted me to help her. I figure maybe we sit there

for fifteen minutes or so, smoking a cigarette and making noises like we're hitting the old high peaks of passion.

But I don't reckon on Lori. She looks me over again, while I stand there, panting slightly, and says, "Joe, you sure are attractive in an earthy sort of way. I used to think Evan was my ideal, but he's too G-D refined. Come on, honey, and start my ganglions jangling."

The picture is changing so fast I think I'm inside a whirling kaleidoscope, but I decide it's no time to count 'em or weigh 'em. I grab hold of Lori, and she grabs hold of me, and from now on no holds are barred. When Lori slithers out of the skin-tight black-satin strapless she's wearing, I see I got a whole lot of fascinating woman to hang onto. And before many minutes are past, I'm hanging onto her for dear life.

When I get some semblance of sanity back, I look around and jump with horror. The situation is impossible, and the door is open. I leap up and reach for my clothes, but there's no need. A quick look around the joint shows me both Sally and Evan have flown the coop. Then I hear Lori making a low, growling noise behind me, and things get busy again, very busy indeed. I don't know what I'm doing, or why, but it's all candy and cake.

The next day, I staggered into the office, feeling lower than the proverbial monkey's uncle. I sit there, my head

in my hands, trying not to think of what happened. If Evan takes a gun to me, I won't hardly blame him, and as for Sally . . . Well, I tell myself I never was alive in that quarter anyway.

Then the phone rings. It's Sally. She says, "Honestly, Joe, I never would have believed it if you."

"I never would have believed it of myself," I tell her, shame-stricken.

"And the funny part of it is, I never thought of you as sexy," she goes on. "But after what you did to Lori . . . The poor gal's a living, loving wreck."

"What about Evan?" I ask.

"We broke up last night," she replies, as casual as if it were a hangnail. Then, "Joe, I don't mind about Lori — after all, we're old friends, Lori and I, and she certainly opened my eyes. I've got to admit something. Last night, before Evan and I went out, I watched you and Lori — the door was open, and I couldn't resist. And, Joe . . ." She stops there, unable to go on.

I almost don't believe what I'm hearing. I want to give Lori a great big kiss — I want to give Sally an even bigger one. I say, just testing, "Okay, hon, I can knock off a bit early and be by around five. Will that be okay?"

"That," says Sally, "will be fine."

I hang up, singing, my blind date blues wiped out for good. All I can think of is that silly slogan, "Never underestimate the power of a woman." The beauty of it is, I got two of them!



"I'll take him."



ADAM's Eve

*The world's eye never looked on
fresher maid than this;
nor ever goodlier quarry fell into any's snare.*
— FROM THE POEMS OF HAFI



ADAM's Eve

*The world's eye never looked on
fresher maid than this;
nor ever goodlier quarry fell into any's snare.*
— FROM THE POEMS OF HAFI



With a dead woman haunting his
every move, he had to cram the memory of
a lifetime into one day

ENCORE

by GLENN LLEWELYN



SHE WAS WAITING for him, there at Logan Airport, as he had known she would be, sitting at the end of one of the benches, off by herself. Don paused, just inside the doorway, letting the warmth of the waiting-room thaw him out, looking at her. Even the brief walk from ramp to luggage room had chilled him, thanks to the raw, near-zero east wind blowing in from Boston Bay.

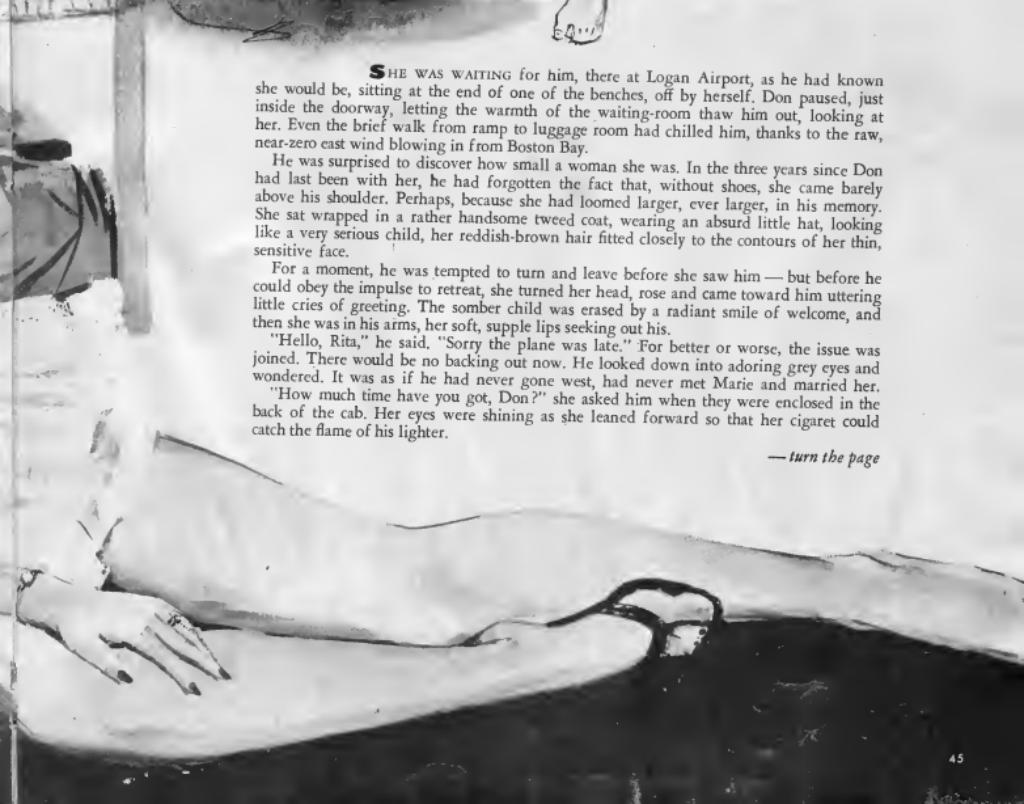
He was surprised to discover how small a woman she was. In the three years since Don had last been with her, he had forgotten the fact that, without shoes, she came barely above his shoulder. Perhaps, because she had loomed larger, ever larger, in his memory. She sat wrapped in a rather handsome tweed coat, wearing an absurd little hat, looking like a very serious child, her reddish-brown hair fitted closely to the contours of her thin, sensitive face.

For a moment, he was tempted to turn and leave before she saw him — but before he could obey the impulse to retreat, she turned her head, rose and came toward him uttering little cries of greeting. The somber child was erased by a radiant smile of welcome, and then she was in his arms, her soft, supple lips seeking out his.

"Hello, Rita," he said. "Sorry the plane was late." For better or worse, the issue was joined. There would be no backing out now. He looked down into adoring grey eyes and wondered. It was as if he had never gone west, had never met Marie and married her.

"How much time have you got, Don?" she asked him when they were enclosed in the back of the cab. Her eyes were shining as she leaned forward so that her cigaret could catch the flame of his lighter.

— turn the page



"Not a hell of a lot," he told her. "Tonight — maybe part of tomorrow. I had to jockey my schedule like crazy to rig it at all. I'm supposed to be inspecting a plant on Long Island right now."

That had been the plan, the original plan. Now that he was here, with Rita, he saw no reason to tell her things were different. There seemed small sense in spoiling a good thing. Not now...

"Gee, but you look wonderful!" she said, hugging his arm and peering up at him. "California must agree with you."

"It's okay," he told her. "You look pretty wonderful yourself."

"I'm too thin," she said with a grimace.

They kissed, a long, lingering, slowly stirring kiss that lasted until the cab hit a bump as it approached the tunnel. When they drew apart, they were breathing deeply, rapidly, and Rita's grey eyes fell away before the intensity of desire in his own. His hands, gripping the silk-covered slenderness of her torso beneath the tweed coat, felt the undersides of her breasts, causing her to squirm a little in his grasp.

He said, "It was damned sweet of you to meet me — just like that — after three years."

"With you, it's always been that way," she said quietly. "When I got your wire yesterday, I never thought of not being there."

They kissed again, in the tunnel, and then, somehow, they were pulling up at the hotel. As he turned from paying off the driver, Don noted a liquor store alongside the entrance.

He bought a fifth of scotch, and then they went in and registered. Don was careful to use a name not his own, gave his residence as Houston, Texas. At least, he thought, they'd have a hell of a time figuring *that* one out. A bellboy in powder blue uniform took them up to the room and flung his bag on the luggage rack at the foot of the big double bed. Don gave him a dollar and sent him on his way.

Alone, they stood for a long moment, just looking at one another, and he could feel the hunger, sparked by memory and fueled by the awkward taxicab embraces, rise and flame over and through him. He said, "Let me help you out of the coat, hon," and, in the process, they became entangled in an embrace.

It was a hungry, thirsty, avid embrace, with almost angry thrust and counterthrust of tongues and hands and bodies, that picked them up like a wave and tossed them together on the unopened bed. Her slim, eager hands, caught his face and held it on hers,

raining kisses on it as their thighs interlocked and their bodies rolled this way and that, tossed on the tormentful sea of passion that had so suddenly engulfed them.

Wrenching her lips from his, Rita gasped, "Now, darling — *now!* I can't wait — ." Her voice trailed off in a moan as he drew her grey-and-white silk print dress up about her waist, exposing cream-white thighs and a restless pelvis encased in black lace panties, which he all but ripped from her body in his frenzy...

When the frenzy passed, Don lay on his belly, smoking a cigaret, watching Rita neatly hang up her dress, then his suit. Despite her plaint of being too thin, Rita actually had a delectable little figure — slender of waist and sweetly curved of limb, with a charmingly round little bottom, just above which a dimple, whose existence he had never before noted, appeared and vanished as she rose on tiptoe to reach the closet hangers.

She turned and looked at him and laughed over her shoulder and said, "What about a drink now?"

"Come here first," he replied.

"Goodness!" she exclaimed, obeying his summons with mock-reluctance, "I thought perhaps marriage would make you ease up a little. But it's made you worse than ever."

"Better than ever," he assured her, rolling over and pulling her onto his lap, letting her take a puff on the cigaret before putting it out. He wished she hadn't mentioned his marriage, although there was no reason why she shouldn't. Then he forgot about everything as he slaked the long-banked fires of desire in this body whose image had danced increasingly before his mind's eye in the past year.

Later, of course, they did talk. Of his marriage, he said quite truthfully, "It's over, Rita. If I hadn't let things run away with me, it never would have happened at all."

"I'm sorry," she said over her glass. "What went wrong, or shouldn't I ask?"

"Why not?" he shrugged. "Marie had a miscarriage after about a year. It scared hell out of her. From then on, she froze up. I was lucky to get her once a week, and then it was like making love to a log."

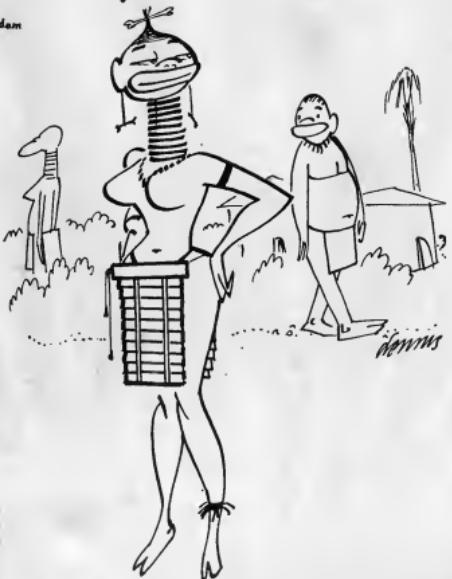
"Poor Don," she sympathized.

"The hell of it was, she won't — wouldn't let me see anyone else," he went on. "For two years, she's been withholding herself and asserting her ownership at the same time. And with her old man owning the business, I was out of luck."

"But you made a break?"

"I made the break," he said. He didn't want to say any more. Instead,

Adam



pouring himself a second drink, he asked, "What about you, hon?"

She shrugged, giving interesting mobility to her firm, shapely, if rather small, breasts. "Nothing much with me," she said, "Not until yesterday, anyway."

"Liar!" he told her, putting down his glass and pulling her toward him.

"It's no lie," she said softly, her lips less than an inch from his. Her nipples brushed the flesh covering his rib-cage, and he flattened them out as he drew her close against him. This time, he let her push him onto his back and cover him. Looking down at him, she paused to push dark reddish-brown hair back from her eyes and laugh softly.

"Are the California girls better than the girls here?" she asked.

"How would I know?" he countered, holding her hips firmly within the strength of his hands.

"You married one," she said.

"Forget it," he told her, putting their bodies into slow rhythm, rhythm that would mount and grind and roll until it became frenzy . . .

"Why the hell didn't I marry you?" he asked her later when it was night outside, and cold as ice, yet softly light and warm within the room.

"I don't know, darling," she replied. "Why didn't you?" Was it because my father doesn't own a company?"

"Funny thing," he said. "I didn't even know about that until Marie and I were engaged. How I hated that old bastard?"

"It's odd," she said, poking a gentle forefinger into his navel.

"What's odd?" he asked.

"That way you talk about them — Marie and now her father. You sound as if they were dead."

It chilled him, but he kept the panic buried. Instead, propping himself up on his elbows, he said, "How about something to eat?"

"Not if it means getting dressed," she said. "It's been too long, and there's too little time to waste."

"Okay." He lay back and puffed on the cigaret she thrust between his lips.

"What are you going to do?" Rita asked.

"About what?"

"About your life — about Marie — about us, if there is any us."

"Darling," he said, tousling her hair gently. "I don't know yet. There's a lot to think through. If I said to you, right now, 'Honey, let's run the hell away together,' — would you?"

"I don't know," she replied, her face masked by shadow. "But if I was in your position, and a man, I'd take my own good time about getting entangled again." She paused, sat up

right, her eyebrows high. "What am I saying?" she asked herself.

They made love again, after a while, then slept.

Rita still slumbered, looking like a charming, tousled, utterly innocent child, when Don awoke. Swiftly, silently, he slipped from the bed, ignoring bath and shower alike as he struggled into his clothes. He had a lot of money on him, but he dared not leave any for her. Undoubtedly, she could use it, but she might not understand, and he had no wish to insult her. There was another, more practical reason, a desire not to permit her in any way to become enmeshed in the dark tangle of his own affairs.

The door clicked loudly as he opened it and pushed his bag out onto the corridor carpet. For a long moment, he stood there, waiting, but there came no sound from the room behind him. Shivering from low vitality brought about by his night's exertions and not having eaten in more than twenty hours, he picked up the suitcase and walked to the elevator.

At the desk, he checked out, informing the clerk that Mrs. Collins — for that was the alias by which he had registered — might wish to be undisturbed for some hours. The clerk stifled a bored yawn and nodded. Don took a cab back to the airport and debated his next destination. Somewhere

warm, he decided as the near-zero air cut through him with a million tiny needles. After California, Boston was no longer a pleasure at this time of year.

He purchased a ticket for San Juan, Puerto Rico, and went into the airport restaurant to eat while he waited for the time of his flight. On the way in, he picked up a couple of papers, one Boston, one New York. The story was there in both of them, on page one in the New York paper, page three in the Boston.

The headline read —

SEEK MISSING HUSBAND IN NEW YORK HOTEL SLAYING OF CALIFORNIA HEIRESS.

They'd catch up with him, of course, he thought. But he'd be out of Boston, and Rita would be in the clear. There was a picture of himself in the New York paper, taken from his college yearbook. For a moment, it gave him a start, but then he looked in the mirror behind the counter at which he sat, and he knew there was small danger from that source.

A waitress intercepted his glance, and came up and said, "Something, Mister?"

"Another coffee, please," he told her. He had to fight against going to the booth against the far wall and calling Rita. He was going to miss her like hell.



"Heard you telling one of the guys that you're proposing to the girl friend Saturday night — Want a letter of recommendation?"



Adam's tales

PORK-YOU-PINE

I met a young man from New York,
Whose dad made a fortune in pork.

Last Friday, at three,
He was married to me,
And next month we're expecting the
stork!

* * *



INSIDE KNOWLEDGE

The two vivacious young stenographers were discussing the latest addition to the staff, an exceedingly handsome young salesman. Said Marge, "I love the way that man dresses, don't you, Gert?"

"I sure do," replied Gert, adding, "And so quickly, too!"

* * *



"I daresay this is the most unusual policy I've written."

JUST DUCKY!

The cute little bear was minding her own business, strolling along a jungle path, when without warning a thick, hairy arm emerged from a dense thicket and hauled the bruin off the path by main force. When she was able to fight her way out, she fled as fast as she could, crying, "I'm a ruined bruin—I'm a ruined bruin!"

Shortly afterward, a young monkey traveled the same path and suffered the same disaster. She emerged, howling, "I'm a raped ape—I'm a raped ape!"

The next wayfarer was a web-footed duck who was grabbed in turn, only to be tossed out of the thicket moments later. Picking itself up, the duck proceeded in triumph, crying, "Everything's Jake—I'm a drake!"

* * *



DAWNY!

The zookeeper was showing a distinguished out-of-town visitor through his menagerie, and was especially proud of some of the more unusual species the park boasted. "In that cage," he said, nodding toward an odd-looking bird, "is a cross between a swan and a goose that we call a swoose. And on your left is a cross between a deer and an antelope, which we call a dope. But this one on your right presents a graver problem. It's a cross between a fawn and a duck, and so far we've been unable to come up with a proper name for it."

* * *

ON THE CUFF

Alma had been hearing from her friend Margot about the wonderful and exciting things that had been happening to her since she left the small town they both came from to settle in Dayton, Ohio. So Alma decided to try her luck and arrived bursting with eagerness to begin a new and more glamorous life. Naturally, Margot showed Alma all the fine clothes she had acquired since coming to Dayton.

"Goodness!" exclaimed Alma, "Where did you ever get all these lovely things?"

"Oh," said Margot calmly, "I bought them with the money I get from the Air Force pilots at Wright Field."

"I'd like to earn some money to buy myself nice things," said Alma.

"It's easy," Margot informed her. "All you have to do is go to Wright Field and take a walk with one of the pilots. He'll be glad to pay you five dollars for a kiss."

Alma went out, determined to follow Margot's advice, and returned in a happy glow of excitement about three A.M. Margot, who had waited up, worrying lest the girl should have got into trouble, said, "It's about time you came back. How did you do?"

"Terrific!" cried Alma. "I made almost six-hundred dollars."

"Then why didn't you take a taxi back here, instead of riding the trolley?"

"Oh," caroled Alma blithely, "I haven't got the money yet. The boys are going to give it to me on payday."

* * *

SECURITY MINDED

Wilkins was only human, and, after a month on the road, succumbed to the blandishments of a hotel siren and went with her to her apartment. There, he made the following proposition to the quail—"Let's sit on the sofa together, and if you'll put both hands on my head and keep them there, I'll pay you twenty-five dollars."

Puzzled, the woman complied with Wilkins' strange request until, at last, her curiosity got the better of her, and she asked, "Would you mind telling me what kick you get out of my hands on your head?"

"No thrill, honey," Wilkins replied, "but I do get security. For twenty-five bucks I know your hands are on my head and not in my pocket!"



HELP! HELP!!!

The shy young man was dismayed to find himself in the clutches of a frighteningly aggressive damsel, who was working him over on her livingroom sofa, fondling and kissing him as if she intended to devour him whole. Finally managing to check the eager woman's amorous assault briefly, the bashful one gasped, "Say, are you married?"

"I used to be, darling," said the amorous one, punctuating the admission with a long and passionate kiss.

Breaking her embrace, the shy young man asked, "Where is your husband now?"

"He's dead, darling—don't worry about him," replied the forthright female.

"Dead?" cried the reluctant swain. "He can't be dead—he's in hiding!"

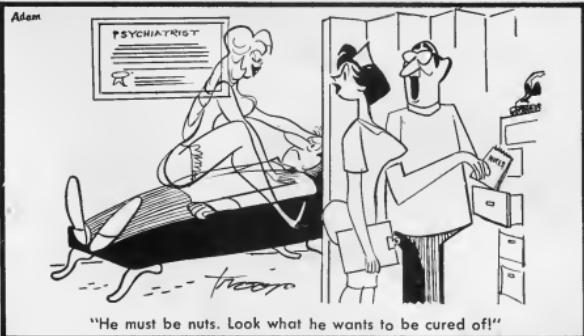


MINK, SCHMINK . . .

"Darling!" cried Nancy to Eloise. "Where did you get that beautiful mink stole? I've been struggling to buy one for years."

"Sweet," replied Eloise, "all you have to do is stop struggling."

* * *



"He must be nuts. Look what he wants to be cured of!"

BONE OF CONTENTION

The salesman was peddling his wares in a heavily populated suburb. After a while, he paused in front of a house from which loud sounds of domestic strife sounded. As the salesman paused to listen, a small boy came running out of the house.

"What's the matter, son?" the salesman asked. "Are your folks fighting?"

"Yes, sir," replied the lad. "They're always fighting."

"Who's your dad?" the salesman asked.

"That's just what they're always fighting about," the boy replied.

* * *

TROPICAL TOPICAL

What men call gallantry, and gods adultery

Is much more common where the climate's sultry!

* * *

Adam



"I don't care how mad they get—if I must drink of the sacred waters, I'll walk up to the lake."

NO FUEL LIKE AN OIL FUEL

He pleaded for burning passion,
But she said, in accents cruel,
"I may be a red-hot mama,
But I ain't nobody's fuel!"

* * *

. . . OF ANOTHER COLOR!

The instructor in charge of the class in sophomore history at a well-known Eastern women's college was discussing certain aspects of World War One, and was somewhat startled when one of her charges arose to inquire, "Ma'am, what is *femme de guerre*?"

The instructor, mildly embarrassed, managed to explain that such a woman was one who profits from wartime by making herself accessible to enlisted personnel for a small consideration.

"Oh!" said the girl, looking surprised. "And I thought they were *hors de combat*!"

* * *



the luckiest casanova in japan

by DAVE JAMPEL

KOSUKE "GEORGIE" SORATOBI, advertised as the smallest man in Japan, is also regarded in many quarters as the luckiest. The 3'5" comedian can gain admittance where others fear to tread.

Constantly humiliated by having the world look down at him, Georgie takes solace in being a favorite in the backstage community of the Nichigeki Music Hall, Tokyo's largest burlesque theatre. The nude dancers welcome him into their dressing rooms. They embrace him as they would a wet-eyed foundling. At 23, Georgie is fully equipped to enjoy his special privileges. As somebody once said, there's compensation in this world.

The fortunate featherweight, in fact, has a disposition more befitting a professional wrestler. He admits his quick temper often gets him into situations his physique cannot defend.

Last year, for example, when he tried to join collegiate merrymakers after a baseball triumph, his presence went unwitnessed. As Georgie's blood neared its kindling temperature, one of the celebrants threatened to step on him. After a fast exchange of barbed words, the enraged mite leaped to deliver a blow to the stomach of his adversary. The effort overcame Georgie, however, and he tumbled to the floor unconscious.

Georgie proudly proclaims that he has grown an inch during the past year and will make a run for the tape measure when anyone doubts him. Now 23, he emphatically promises to grow still taller. In this event, he says hopefully, "There are many people I would like to punch."

Of normal-sized parents, Georgie suffered a brain injury when he was three that stunted his growth. He was trying to open a door, and when he couldn't reach the knob, he elected to stand on some furniture. This position achieved, the door suddenly opened. Little Georgie bounced on his head.

A show business veteran, he says he has too much fun on stage, scampering around and heckling the girls, to consider doing anything else. Besides, what else would he do? If he were of regulation size, Georgie feels he would be reduced to leading the drab life of an office worker.

The 55-pounder once signed to appear with a circus for a month, but became displeased with the backstage atmosphere and broke his contract. He bitterly recalls that someone



Photos by EIKOH HOSOE

Backstage favorite with the girls at the Nichigeki Music Hall, George wouldn't change places with a giant



had bought him a sweater and before he had a chance to try it on for size, it was stolen. The burlesque queens take better care of him, he avows.

Georgie, whose father is a commercial painter, went to school until the sixth grade. He was four years behind in his studies when he dropped out. Eight years ago, he found his 'niche' when he made his theatrical debut at the Imperial Theatre.

Many normal activities are difficult for Georgie. He hates walking, especially in heavy traffic. He claims that the drivers cannot always see him. He doesn't go in much for Japan's popular sport of mountain climbing either.

Swimming is also on Georgie's negative list. One time while he was wallowing in the surf, he stepped into a hole and almost drowned.

Shrill-voiced and cherubic, Georgie enjoys smoking, a nip of sloe gin now and then, reading comic books, sleeping and going to the movies. He can gain entrance to any theatre free of charge by saluting the manager. *Samurai* (Japanese ancient warriors) and cowboy films are his favorites. He likes *Piper Laurie* for obvious reasons and *Alan Ladd* for what he terms, "Sincerity." If he ever gets to America, Georgie said he would like nothing better than to meet Ladd. After that, there's little he would ask for.

Georgie usually pays adult fare on trains although he could easily pocket a slice of that price. But he said he doesn't like to take advantage of his situation. Last spring, however, when he was touring in southern Japan, he was scheduled to return to Osaka, Nippon's second largest city. He had been sorely looking forward to his first plane ride on this occasion, but found himself with only enough money for children's fare.

The actor who was his traveling companion advised Georgie to act as his son. The midget agreed. He recalls that he had a strong desire to smoke, but had to restrain himself. As much as he hates candy, for appearances sake, he forced himself to munch on sweets. When they arrived at the airport in Osaka, Georgie forgot his role and lit a cigarette. His friend became alarmed and, fearing detection, they raced to the nearest taxi.

While Georgie has learned to live with his misfortune, he admits there is something lacking in his life. He is looking for a bride. She must be 18 years old and less than 3'3".

Nipponese dyna-mite gets paid for a job most Americans would take on for nothing





MARKET,
from page 35

be interested in this sordid detail," I told her grimly. "When I got there, my redheaded pal was very, very dead. Somebody had busted in and ransacked the place and strangled her."

"Peter!" she gasped, and the way her coral-tipped fingers gripped my wrist showed me the shot had scored.

"That's not all," I went on. "I got a hunch on the way back and took a look at that gun I keep in my car — it's been fired, twice."

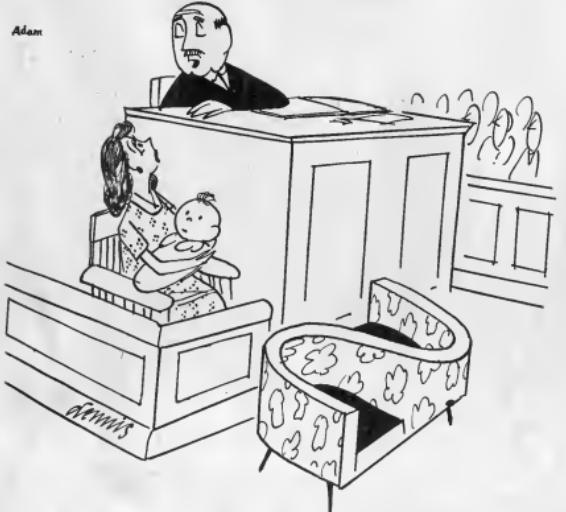
"Oh, no, Peter!" Even in the dim light of the saloon, her eyes registered panic. Then, "What are you going to do?"

"Before I decide," I told her, "I'd better learn what this is all about — and quick. I've either killed somebody, which I don't really believe, or I'm being marked beautifully for a frame."

"You didn't kill anybody, Peter," she whispered. "You couldn't — unless it was self defense . . ."

"Or the sort of thing Fellowes walked into at the office just now," I added, giving her hand a definitely non-avuncular squeeze. "Thanks for keeping shut about the five gees, doll. If he'd known about that, he'd have hauled me in for sure."

Adam



"Now very slowly, in your own words, tell the court how it happened."

"But, Peter, what are you going to do?"

The head-bartender came on duty then, a smiling, bald-headed Irishman named Reilly, with a face to match his scarlet jacket. He gave me a flip and said, "In here early tonight, Mr. Brush."

"That's right," I told him. "Things were jumping the last time, right?"

"You can say that again!" he replied with emphasis. "Saturday nights are murder."

"Let's have another," I told him, and, with a prideful look at Dana, "Tonight, I've got something to celebrate."

He looked her over, said, "You were doing okay Saturday night, too." I wanted to clobber him until I saw Dana had slipped from her stool and was headed for the powder room.

"You mean the redhead?" I asked casually, trying not to think of the way poor Vonnie had looked two hours earlier.

"No, sir," said Reilly. "I mean the blonde in the white dress. That was a lot of woman — and was she working on you!"

"Oh, well," I said, essaying a light tone, "all play and no work makes Joan . . ." I let it hang, and Reilly went on about his chores.

When Dana got back, a couple of minutes later, I was beginning to jitter. When Reilly had talked about a well-stacked blonde working on me, and I had dropped that crack using the name Joan, I realized all at once I wasn't kidding. Somewhere along the back-track,

with a man wearing a scar on his cheek, had been such a woman — and she had been working on me to do something for her.

I had to hook up time and place — I had to hook up a blonde named Joan and a little, dark, scarred man named Lucilio Kazar and a redhead named Vonnie Henson. All I knew for sure was that I had been in the "Queen and Pawn", facing Reilly across this same bar. That was the last thing I did remember, before waking up, hungover, with Vonnie yesterday afternoon in Redondo Beach. I wondered how many well-equipped blondes named Joan were roaming the Hollywood Hills.

I told Dana what had happened, and she began to get excited, too. She said, "Darling, how are you going to do it?"

"I'm going to try getting just as drunk as I did Saturday night and see if I can follow the pattern," I told her. "Sometimes, a guy will remember what he's done when he's stewed if he repeats the performance."

"You may just pull another blank," said the practical Dana.

"Honey," I told her, "I've got no right to ask it of you, but —"

"— if you think for a moment you're going to leave me out of it now, you're out of your mind, my friend," she told me. "What next?"

"I'm not sure," I said. "Maybe we'd better wait for that blonde."

"And maybe we'd better not," said Dana. "We've still got some pieces to fit together — your redhead and my pal Kazar — and besides, the blonde may never show here tonight. Or any other, for that matter . . ."

I signaled Reilly to bring us another drink. Dana begged off. "Somebody's got to drive," she said.

I had one. I had a second, while Dana hovered anxiously beside me. I had a third, and still I didn't know where we went from the "Queen and Pawn". It was, I thought, regarding Dana's delectability with an urge that increased geometrically to the arithmetic ratio of the alcohol I consumed, a hell of a note.

No lead, no memory jog. No nothing.

"Come on," said Dana, tugging my elbow. "Blonde or no blonde, you need air, Peter."

As we walked out, I remembered something, or thought I did. The hell of it was, I wasn't quite sure what. I started to turn back, but Dana kept me headed toward the great outdoors. Jerry, the night doorman, had come on since our entry, and he looked at me solicitously — the bastard should, the tips I've given him. He said, "You okay to drive, Mr. Brush?"

"I'm driving," snapped Dana.

"Sorry, miss," said Jerry. "That is, I'm glad to hear it. Saturday night,

when you were like this, Mr. Brush, you took a cab."

"Tell us," said Dana, while I was still trying to put fume and fume together inside my head. "Tell us exactly what Mr. Brush did here Saturday night. Was he alone?"

Jerry gave me an is-it-okay look, and I nodded. He said, "No, one of the waiters helped him out. I saw Mr. Brush was a bit under the weather, and suggested the cab. He took it and didn't get back here till after closing. Then—you'll pardon me, miss—he had a red-headed young woman with him. But he seemed sober enough to drive, so I let them go."

By this time, the fresh air, plus the information, was de-addling my wits. I fished a five-spot out of my overloaded wallet, handed it to him and said, "Two questions, Jerry—maybe three?"

"I hope nothing's wrong, Mr. Brush," said the doorman.

"So do I," I told him. "One—do you remember who the waiter was?"

"Yessir," said Jerry. "His name was Lucilio or something like that. He quit Monday, or you could talk to him."

"Did he have a scar on one cheek?"

"That's right, he did—a small one."

"Thanks," I said. "Now for Number Three—is the cab driver here to-night?"

"Sorry, Mr. Brush," said Jerry. "It's his night off—but if you want to know where he took you, I can tell you." He waited, while I dug out another fin and handed it to him.

"Okay—where?" I asked.

He pulled me aside, with a meaningful glance at Dana. He said, his voice low, "It was a joint down on Hollywood Boulevard the waiter tipped you to. You said you was looking for quail."

"Thanks, Jerry. Do you remember what joint?"

He told me, and my memory came back another notch. On the way there, with Dana driving, I said, "It's beginning to make half-sense. But just between us, I don't get the blonde. Oh, I figure her for the five grand, one way or another, but what I don't dig is why, if I was on the town like I was, and she was working so hard on me, I went looking for a beat-up pig like Vinnie Fenton?"

"There's no accounting for tastes—especially in women where men are concerned," Dana said with a trace of the old sourball tone.

I soft-talked her out of that, then said, "Maybe, if what she was pitching to me disgusted me enough, I'd have gone whole hog the other way." Even as I said it, I knew it was so.

"You ought to get hold of Tim," said Dana. "He ought to know what

—turn the page

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BOX 46977, Los Angeles 46, California

you've dug up about Lucilio."

"Not yet," I said. "The big bastard likes you too much, doll. He'd love to lock me up and put me out of the running."

"Is that what you think of me?" Dana asked ominously. "That I'd—"

"What I think of you," I told her, "is and has been for a long time unprintable. Let's not fight until we're better friends, okay, doll?"

"You're taking a hell of a lot for granted," she croaked, but I knew I was as good as in. It steamed me so I almost drove right past the joint.

It was one of those dingy, dismal dives that turn up on latter-day Hollywood Boulevard between Highland and Argyle. A real, juke-box creep joint. Maybe it was jumping Saturday night, but now, on Wednesday, it was a mausoleum. Somehow, even though I knew the food would be lousy, I didn't want a drink in this place. So I steered Dana to a booth, and we ordered coffee from a waiter who looked as if he had been in the ring about five years too long. I didn't even bother asking him if he remembered me—it wouldn't have meant anything if he'd said he did.

"Well," said Dana, wearing a look of distaste on her sexy little face, "what now?"

"We drink coffee," I told her. "It's probably okay. Then . . . Hell, I don't know."

"I wish you'd pick your spots better than this," said Dana. "It stinks—I mean it literally stinks."

"No argument," I said.

We sat there, while a couple of tired looking sailors fed nickels into a jukebox whose selections seemed confined to rock 'n' roll and country music—both of which you can have, as far as I'm concerned. We had another cup of coffee, and then a third. Mercifully, the stuff was not too bad. We watched one of the gobs try to set himself up with a scrawny blonde who joined them at the bar.

The waiter came over and hung his busted beak close to mine. He said, in his thick, slugnuttly accents, "A lady, chief—outside. She wants to see you."

I nodded, and he went away. I looked at Dana. I said, "I guess this is it, doll. If I'm not back in five minutes, call Tim."

She nodded. Her eyes were very large, her mouth very small. She was scared. She held out a hand and said, "Be careful, darling. Remember, we aren't friends yet."

"My hide is precious from now on," I told her. I grinned.

"What's so funny?" she asked.

"I was thinking of how Tim would feel if he knew he'd saved your life for

a fate worse than death with me," I told her. It made a good exit line.

I started toward the front, but the waiter steered me the other way. "Out back, chief," he said. "The parking lot."

I didn't like it. My convertible was parked in front. But I went out through a side door, past a row of ashcans. I wished I had my gun with me, but I don't believe in carrying them. There are times when you might shoot somebody and get in real trouble.

There were only three cars in the lot, and one of them was a big, new Caddy, with the motor running. I walked over, and there she was—blonde and elegant and cold as ice. Seeing her and knowing what I did then, I had the whole picture. I said, "Good evening, Mrs. Eliot. I believe I've got something that belongs to you."

"Get in the car, Mr. Brush," said Reilly from the back seat. His tone was as respectful as ever, but he had a gun and I was in no mood to argue with him just then. "In front," he added.

"You goofed!" the woman said bitterly. She got the car under way, heading for Yucca. "You loused it all up."

"No, honey," I told her. "Your pal Reilly goofed. He should have known I was ribbing when I said I'd take on the job. I may play rough now and then, but I'm not in the market for murder. I don't know who made your nice elderly husband disappear so neatly, but I've got an idea."

"Shut up," said Reilly from the back seat, his respectful tone gone with the wind. We cut over to Franklin, and I had a pretty fair idea where we were heading—somewhere nice and isolated, in the Hills. I said, "Or maybe Reilly didn't goof. Maybe he knew I don't go in for custom-made killings. Maybe he and Lucilio and the redheaded broad who kept me out of commission in Redondo for three days had it figured. Maybe he can tell you what happened to your husband, honey."

"Shut up!" snapped Reilly. "So help me, if you don't, I'll let you have it right here."

"No!" cried the blonde. "What's he talking about? I want to know."

"Ask your buddy," I told her. Then I did shut up. I was in no special hurry to shorten what looked more and more like both a very short life and a very unmemorable one.

So help me, my blonde was so upset she missed the Hollywood Outpost turn off Franklin that leads to Mulholland Drive. She had to go on to La Brea and turn back to Hollywood and around the block by Sycamore and do it all over again. I thought of making a leap for it while we were stopped for a red light, but the odds were too damn stacked the other way. I figured, by now, Dana

would be calling Tim. I hoped it would do some good, but I couldn't figure out how.

We had to stop on Franklin again for the red light. There were a half-dozen cars in front of us. I said to the blonde who had had her husband killed, "Maybe you'd like your dough back before you go on. You might not be able to later, and it could be traced."

"Yes—no—yes; she said. She was really mixed up. I got out my wallet and dug out the money, just as we got going. She stayed in neutral, and the cars behind us started honking.

"Watch the tricky son-of-a-bitch," warned Reilly from the back seat, I half expected him to cold-cock me right there. He would have, if he'd used his head.

Just as she started to turn the corner up into the hills, I thrust the bills at her. She had to take her eyes off the road—she couldn't help it—and I got hold of the wheel and gave it a twist. I could hear Reilly yelp with alarm, but he was too late. I hated to do it to a beautiful hunk of car like that Caddy, but I ran it right into a tree on the corner. I could hear the whole front end crunch in . . .

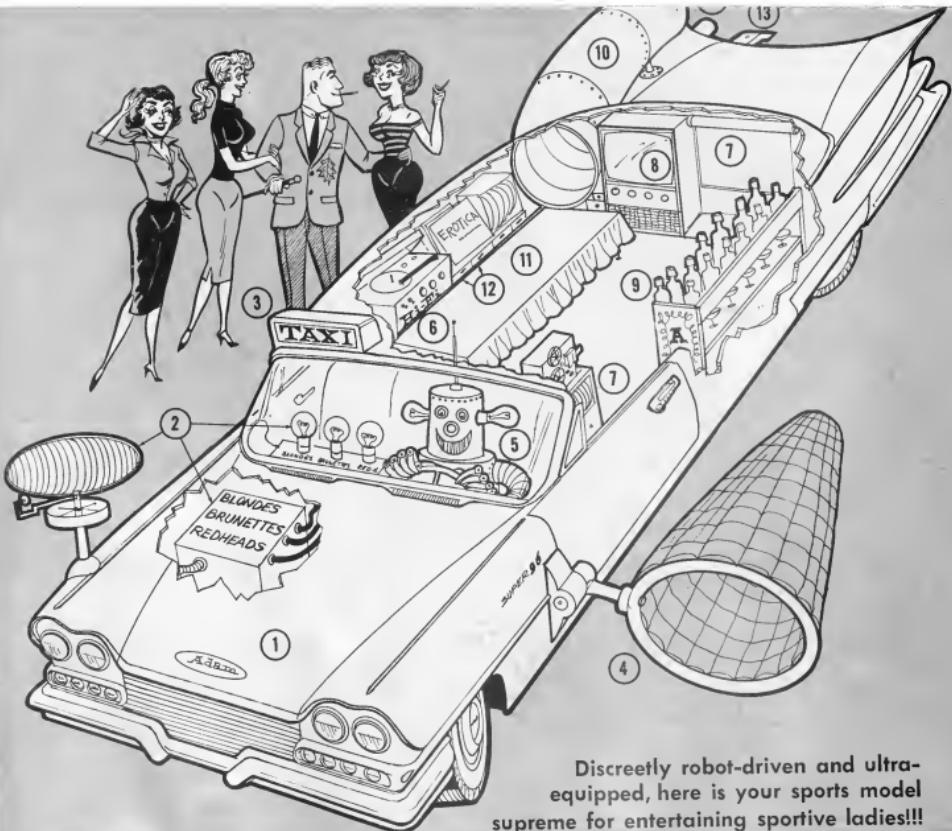
"You bastard!" shouted Reilly, and I figured I was in for it. But then came a sound I usually dread when I'm out on the road—the blessed symphony of police sirens. For once in their lives they were there when needed . . .

Well, that's about it. Tim Fellowes got himself a nice murder case and a raft of publicity. Reilly and Mrs. Eliot wound up in the gas-chamber after a sensational trial—they had a hell of a time getting the late Mr. Eliot out of the Pacific since Reilly and Lucilio had slit his belly and filled it with sand.

The whole thing came out in court—or maybe you read it in the papers. How Reilly and Lucilio and the redhead had been running their little private crime syndicate for over a year, cashing in on the peddaillos of "Queen and Pawn" customers who talked too much in their cups.

How Mrs. Eliot looked like big loot to them, with me as the perfect pigeon. How they pulled the job perfectly, but Lucilio celebrated with too much weed and decided I'd already been paid off and somebody was holding out on the loot. How he overdid things trying to get Vonnies to talk and killed her, then almost repeated with Dana. How Reilly did not dare trust my memory lapse and decided to hook Mrs. Eliot further by wrapping her up in my murder. It was all there in the papers, if you happened to read the story.

What did I get out of it? Well, I drew some nice fat assignments. And I got Dana, which was all I really wanted.



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roman starlet, shining bright...



THE LONG-TRESSED, lush-bodied young lady on these pages is named Thea Sterpin and is currently rated the hottest model in Rome, as well as the girl most likely to out-Sophia Loren screenwise. But Thea, who hails originally from Trieste, across the Adriatic Sea, has a whole chestful of spare talents few other actresses, including Sophia, can call their own.

In fact, Thea didn't come to Rome to be a model or actress at all. Instead, she arrived carrying brushes, paints, palate and a scholarship to study art in one of Rome's most famous academies. At that time, she was considered more of a threat to the fame of Rafael or Michelangelo than that of Sophia or Gina Lollobrigida.

But something happened along the way, and Thea laid down her brushes and became acquainted with camera and spotlight instead. Beauteous of figure and face, brown of hair and hazel-eyed, Thea speaks English and French as fluently as she does Italian and is a fine *dansuse*, especially to modern music.

Ace Italian Model Has Many Gifts Beyond Posing and Blowing Bubbles





On the bounding main,
the battle of the sexes usually
ends in a delightful clinch

Virtue Is A Landlubber

by JAMES V. LAWRENCE

IF YOU ARE a man or woman, boy or girl, really in search of amorous adventure, the most rewarding thing you can do is take a trip. But don't travel aboard a plane or a train — by all means take a boat. As long as the voyage lasts at least two days and three nights, it matters not whether you buy cabin space aboard a big boat or a small one, aboard a de luxe ocean liner like the S.S. United States or a slow-going freighter equipped to carry a limited number of passengers. The main thing is, if you really want romance, get to sea.

Decades ago, a veteran Hollywood screenwriter, Louis Sherwin, remarked of the climate of Southern California, that it was "hell on dogs and women." There is something even more stimulating and intoxicating about the ocean air, when inhaled by members of the fair sex aboard an ocean-going vessel at sea.

The effect of taking a sea-voyage upon women, young and old and otherwise virtuous as Vestals, is fantastic. Demure matrons, ashore apostles of Togetherness and no second martinis and the P.T.A., after waving farewell to their loved ones on the dock as their ship pulls out, disappear quickly into their cabins, shed tailored suits, girdles and bras, step up their lipstick, loosen their hairdos and come forth with nostrils aquiver for romance, clad in their gayest and scantiest (weather permitting) attire. As for the younger and tenderer females, it is not merely their nostrils that quiver.

When a nubile young miss or an

attractive married woman of almost any age south of 60 finds herself temporarily separated by water from the restrictions and inhibitions of home, she seems to feel an irresistible urge to run, not walk, toward the nearest rail, there to cast overboard the lastest confinements of respectability. From then on, she is not only fair game — she is Diana the Huntress incarnate.

In the main, women, like everyone else, travel for exactly four reasons. The first is for business, the second is for recuperation or change, the third from critical necessity, the fourth is for pleasure. Each of them can be, and frequently is, a spur toward romantic adventure and a fast night's run toward stateroom or lifeboat.

When a young woman is given an overseas business assignment, she has reached a checkpoint of achievement in her career. She has reached a colorful plateau most women attain only in their powder-room daydreams. She is intoxicated not only with the heady booze of achievement but tense over the prospect of meeting enlarged responsibilities in a strange land. In short, for the number of days and nights the voyage endures, she is under exquisite tension — tension she may be able to work off playing shuffleboard but probably can't. After all, you don't play shuffleboard at night. What this girl needs is someone to trigger all her locked-in tensions and give her release. In short, she needs a man as never before in her life. And when a smart, aggressive woman needs a man, and there are men around to be had for

the asking, she gets one.

As to recuperation — unless Mama or Cousin Ella or Aunt Louise is actually heading for a burial at sea, she is going to spend her days on a deck chair under a steamer rug, sipping bouillon and reading Emerson or Trollope, just so long. Then it's going to be, off with the blankets and bring on the vodka and, "Where is the nearest available male!"

As for critical necessity, such crises involving either a flight from one's home or a move toward new horizons or merely an ocean voyage to settle Grandfather Wilbur's last will and testament, all of them involve deep emotional adjustments and readjustments, with the trip itself offering a sort of no-man's-land in between — a no-man's-land equipped with interesting male fellow-passengers and that ever-handsome and dashing young third officer. At such a time, even the most poised and levelheaded females are beset with an edge-of-the-world feeling that demands every moment be lived right up to the hilt. And such living can hardly be hinted up without a man to give it meaning.

As for pleasure, well, let's take a look at what happens when Carol and her best girl-friend, Alice, finally get their hard-pressed parents to ante up the happy cabbage for a 10-day jaunt through tropic seas during the holiday season.

As Casanova so often points out in his justly famed "Memoirs," the fact that there are two of them, both pleasure bent, causes inhibitions and promises to mother to be discarded even more rapidly and completely than if either maiden were traveling alone. This is their "big chance," and they both know it — not to acquire husbands, but the experience with which husbands can later be snagged with ease.

As Carol says, conveniently forgetting "that time" with the good-looking Exeter boy last summer at the beach, "I've been a good girl all my life, and now I'm going to be bad and have fun."

To which Alice, undesirous of recalling her big moments with the high-school football senior for whom she has just finished promising to "wait a year," replies, "You and me both."

By the time the girls return home, they will be thorough sophisticates in amour, and their parents may find difficulty in understanding their daughters — but no more than Carol and Alice will have in understanding themselves. For the Exeter boy and the high-school footballer are going to seem awfully callow.





MASS,
from page 29

hearing much of your talk this evening."

"Just what are you suggesting?" said Dr. Mac, a wary light entering his eyes.

"We're among friends," said the saloon-owner, "so I won't be causing you trouble, but I'm still thinking you know a method of getting our problem out of the way without breaking any Territorial laws."

"I don't understand," said Dr. Mac, "If you're suggesting what I —"

"And what else?" Paddy O'Gorman interrupted. "I'm thinking of the old ruined mission chapel on Palomino Mesa, where the snakes and lizards bask in the sun all day and do other things at night. I'm thinking of the great buzzards that roost there, and I'm thinking of the old well that still holds water if you dig deep enough."

"I don't understand you," Dr. Mac repeated. "Why should I?" He glanced at Fowler and Don Pedro, who were obviously puzzled by the exchange. "Why should I understand you?" he said again.

"Because, my friend," said Paddy incisively, "I've been watching you and listening to you for a long time now, Dr. Mac. Unless I'm out of my mind, before you became a physician, man, you were a priest."

"On what do you base that supposition?" queried Dr. Mac, as the others looked on in bewilderment.

"On many things," said the saloon-

keeper, "including the way you organize the logic of your sentences. Also upon the excellence of your Spanish, and upon the knowledge you have revealed to me, when in your cups, of the Gnostics, the Arians and the Manichean Dualism. Only a graduate of the College of Holy Orders at Salamanca, Spain, would know all those things."

"Perhaps," countered Dr. Mac, "but I admit nothing — yet. Now, if your proposal is what I believe it to be, there are two things lacking."

"I'll be aware of what you're meaning, Dr. Mac," said Paddy O'Gorman, "and I can supply them both — the newborn babe, unbaptized, lies wrapped in sheet in my ice-box awaiting burial — and the priest to perform the mass in question . . . well, I'll be believing I'm looking at him right now."

Dr. Mac put his head back and laughed. It was not a joyous laugh, though its echoes made the bannister on the Jerry-built staircase rising behind him tremble. It was a laugh composed of many emotions and feelings — relief, a relaxation of tension, derision, a bit of inverted triumph perhaps — but mirth was not among them.

Leaning forward, toward the bartender, Dr. Mac said, "You'll have been unfrocked yourself, man? Do not deny it, for how could anyone save another graduate of Salamanca recognize the signs you just revealed?"

"I'll be damned!" said Jim Fowler, reaching for his glass.

"Dios!" murmured Don Pedro, lapsing into Spanish and crossing himself.

"Not unfrocked," replied Paddy with a trace of pride. "Disgraced, perhaps, through my own weakness and folly, assigned to this God-forsaken desert and forgotten, but surely not unfrocked."

"Very well," said Dr. Mac, his eyes glowing with delight at his triumph. "Then you're the man to read the mass of Saint Seaire, not I — for I am surely disqualified through having been as thoroughly unfrocked as any priest since Casanova!"

"May God be with me!" muttered Paddy O'Gorman, crossing himself. "What have I let my foolish tongue talk myself into?"

"Perhaps," suggested Dr. Mac, his eyes on the door at the far end of the bar, "you are on the way to being the salvation of Skinner's Ridge — certainly that of our friend Don Pedro and the lovely Donna Inez. Besides, you can afford a trip to Rome for a Papal pardon, if you are still concerned about your immortal soul."

"But what if I should fail?" asked Paddy, and then, squeezing his eyes

tight shut, "What am I saying? It is not failure, but success that I should be fearing!"

"You'll not be failing, Father, to my way of thinking," said Dr. Mac, revealing an unexpected trace of Irish brogue himself. "I might say your success is already assured." Even as he spoke, he watched the barely opened door close silently until not even a crack showed. He drained his glass and stood up, ready to leave and steady on his pins as if he had never touched a drop all evening.

"Tomorrow evening then, Father?" he asked softly.

"Tomorrow evening," replied the holy barmen solemnly, his eyes on the table in front of him. "And may the Lord have mercy upon me!"

"Amen, Father," said Dr. Mac, moving toward the rickety stairway and his room upstairs. "Let us meet at Don Pedro's at ten o'clock — it's on the way."

AS IT HAPPENED, the following night was moonless, which leant an added macabre touch to the grim proceeding. As they rode across the gaunt grassland toward the ruined chapel tower, Dr. Mac, riding behind Don Pedro and Paddy O'Gorman with Jim Fowler, tried to explain to his puzzled companion just what was afoot. He said, "It is an old Basque superstition, a sort of voodoo, that goes back hundreds, perhaps thousands, of years."

Fowler snorted. "It's going to take a lot more than a hex or a curse or a superstition to put Jose Echartavire where he belongs."

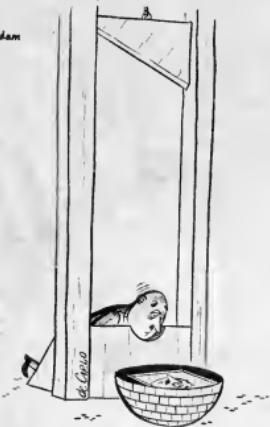
"You're wrong, Jim," said Dr. Mac. "It will work."

"Okay — if you say so, Doc," said the cattleman with a trace of contempt. "But what the devil is it?"

"What the devil is singularly fitting," said Dr. Mac, steadying his horse after it half-stumbled. "The ritual is called the Mass of St. Seaire, and it is very, very evil indeed. It must be delivered by a legitimate priest at 11 o'clock in a deserted chapel or church, where snakes and owls make their home. We lack owls, here in Skinner's Ridge, but I feel that our buzzards will do just as well. There must be a well, into which an unbaptized baby is dumped, and that we have."

"I don't like it," said Fowler. "It's all a lot of pagan mumbo-jumbo to me."

"Perhaps," said the physician, the darkness hiding his cynical half-smile, "but very effective mumbo-jumbo if practiced against a Basque. The priest must drink of the well-water after the babe is flung into it. Then he must perform certain rituals, all of them the



reverse of proper church ritual. The actual mass must be recited backward, for one thing. I imagine poor Paddy has been rehearsing all day, to do it properly."

"It's insane," said Fowler unhappily. "And how is it going to affect Jose?"

"It will kill him," said Dr. Mac simply. He said no more, and Fowler, after peering at him through the darkness as if to determine whether or not the physician was kidding, kept silent, too.

AFTER PERFORMING his duties as assistant to the unhappy priest, during performance of the early portions of the dread ritual of Saint Secaire, Dr. Mac stood back in the deep shadows, while the Reverend Paddy O'Gorman began to speak the mass before the ruined altar in the roofless chapel. Only the dim, uneven light of a pair of black candles, set at either end of the altar, provided illumination. Fowler, his disbelief forgotten, looked on in something close to awe as Paddy stumbled into the jumbled incantation. Beside him, Don Pedro stood silently, his eyes on the priest. Dr. Mac, however, remembered the barely opened door in the saloon the night before, and his fears were not those of the others, but served to keep him very much on the alert.

It was hard not to fall under the spell of the dire proceeding, even for such a cynical, sophisticated disbeliever as himself. The night, the ruin, the sense of lurking snakes and buzzards, memory of the pitiful little body tossed down the well in front of the chapel — along with the service itself, these had a hypnotic effect, a hypnotic effect the physician fought down as his eyes roved the darkness about them.

Thus it was that they caught the dull gleam of metal where, an instant before, there had been nothing but shadow, a gleam reflected dimly by the uneven, sparse light. Quite carefully, he lifted the revolver he had drawn when his part in the ritual was concluded and took careful aim and waited.

The gleam moved and became the barrel of a rifle, advancing slightly as it was aimed at the priest. Squinting slightly, Dr. Mac was able to make out the darker form that was a man's body behind it. Hesitating no longer, he fired, once, twice, three times, the bright flame of the shots shattering the darkness, even as their sharp concussions tore apart the stillness of the occasion.

A gurgling scream, commenced after the first shot, was cut off by the third. The gleam of the rifle barrel vanished as it clattered to the stone floor of the chapel, followed by the softer thud of a body.

"Let's have more light," Dr. Mac said crisply. "I think we've caught us a devil."

It was Jose, dead as the baby in the well, with two bullets through his chest. When the others had recovered from their shock, Dr. Mac took charge and superintended what had to be done. Jose was unceremoniously dumped in the well with his offspring, and a number of large stones were pried from the rubble of the ruin and thrown on top of the corpses.

"Good idea, Doc," said Fowler. "That way, nobody's going to get poisoned by taking a drink out of it."

For quite a while, on the way back to town, the four riders were silent. Then, Jim Fowler, again with the physician, said, "Pretty damn lucky, Jose's turning up that way. Saved us a lot of trouble. D'you suppose he went plumb loco or something?"

"No," said Dr. Mac, "Jose didn't go crazy. He knew that if he didn't stop the Mass of Saint Secaire in time, it would kill him."

"You're joking!" said the incredulous cattleman.

"Far from it," said Dr. Mac.

"But how could that mumbo-jumbo back there hurt him?"

"Because," said the physician, "he believed it would. The secret of all magic, Jim, is not how well it deceives, but lies in the readiness to believe of those upon whom it is practiced. From infancy, like other Basques, Jose was taught that the Mass of Saint Secaire would kill him."

"But how did he know we were doing it?" Fowler asked.

"Because Maria told him. I saw her eavesdropping last night. No woman who loves a man enough to bear him three children out of wedlock is going to stand by and let him be killed, no matter how much she may say she hates him. I wasn't exactly surprised, therefore, when he turned up at the chapel."

"I still think he went loco," muttered the cattleman.

"Perhaps all belief is a form of madness," said Dr. Mac. "It was such thinking, along with a fondness for lithé, dark-haired young girls and good whiskey that cut short my career in the church."

"I don't know," said Fowler. Then, raising his voice, "Paddy, what do you think? Would Jose have died anyway?"

"I'm thinking I'm hardly the one to be answering that," said the saloon-keeper-priest. "Thanks to heaven I'll not be needing a trip to Rome and a papal pardon for saying the black mass through."

"Amen!" said Dr. Mac. He could see the lights of Skinner's Ridge blinking ahead of him.

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- Eager photographers who use up their own stock can buy new film right on the premises and can even have it processed and printed there as they continue to shoot!

The only thing they have to remember is to bring their own cameras — the studio doesn't supply them!





TIME,
from page 19

the taste of her mouth full of sweet wildness. Savagely, her teeth clashed against his. Lyrice was no passive, too-soft woman, but a demanding fury, a conquering firmness of young breasts and strong thighs, smooth-warm and thrusting. She absorbed Joe into a fierce explosion of flesh and mind.

Softly, she whispered into his mouth: "So gentle — so big a man and yet so gentle, I will never leave you, my false Roman."

Joe nuzzled into the soft, thick curls and went to sleep. Sometime later, Lyrice shook him awake. A wine-skin bulging with cool claret was on the table, and food.

He ate, looking at her. She had been shopping; for her flowing gown was white now, and her new sandals snugged her feet. A thin metal circlet passed across her forehead and into her hair — the traditional mark of the slave.

"Pretty," Joe said around a shank of roasted mutton, and she pirouetted to show how the dress swirled about her golden legs. "Wish I could take you with me tonight."

"It is not unusual for nobles to bring their own serving girls to a feast."

"I'd better not," Joe said, and drew his notebook and pen from beneath his tunic. He scribbled notes of things he had seen, things the professor wanted to know.

"That's a strange stylus," Lyrice said, "and the tablet is not wax."

"Don't ask questions. Curious women annoy me."

She pinched him and laughed. "I ask you to take me with you tonight. You will need help. They may discover that you are no provincial."

Joe knew she was right. He'd have to keep her close, though, if the upcoming orgy was anything like history books described such parties. He *wanted* to keep her close, for Lyrice was more woman than any he had known in his own time. She was lusty, honest and open in passion; her fresh, un-painted loveliness was far greater than that of women who were toasts of beauty in a faraway world.

After dark came down on the City of the Seven Hills, she was with him. They followed a guide who took them only as far as the helmeted sentry at the palace entrance.

A glance at Joe's toga, and the guard saluted and passed them through into the palace grounds. Wild music and shrill laughter poured out of the pavilion to greet them, and Lyrice held tightly to Joe's hand.

Then they were a part of the mad gaiety, near-static jetsam is an insane sea of flushed faces and frenzied bodies. Joe pushed through the drunken crowd, searching for Demonica.

He found her sprawled at the edge of a scented pool, polished ivory legs spread carelessly from her silken gown. When she saw Joe, she lifted one bare foot and pushed it against the chest of a young man kneeling beside her. "Away, dwarf!"

One hand against his toga, Joe bowed low. Demonica caught at him with both hands and pulled him down beside her. Lyrice glowered from beneath lowered eyelids.

Wine-wet, burning, Demonica's mouth closed over Joe's in a long, searching kiss. "There," she panted, "that is the only way Demonica expects to be greeted."

A wine goblet was thrust into his hand, and Joe saw they had an audience — a giggling circle of men and women. A woman prodded Joe's chest with one finger. "Isn't he huge?"

Joe blinked at her naked breasts, at the nipples rouged with scarlet.

A sullen-faced man pulled her roughly away. The cold reflection of diamonds on his fingers matched the faceted glitter of his eyes. "I am Marius Vespasian," he said. "Tonight this woman is mine."

The name didn't mean anything to Joe; he shrugged. "Keep her, then. I am Justus of Macedonia."

Face paling, Demonica broke in. "I see you brought your new slave. Does she dance?"

Joe whipped a glance at Lyrice, and she nodded. Demonica clapped her hands and lyres took up a melody that muted cymbals and throbbing drums followed.

Hands above her head, Lyrice wheeled into an open space. Her hips caught the drumbeat; each rhythmical thrust of them was suggestive, stirring. Skillfully, she avoided clutching hands, lost in the fervid tempo of her dance.

Patrician, slave, dancers — no woman there could match her. With difficulty, Joe looked away to register the sights and sounds of this gathering for the future. History books hadn't gone far enough. No dry words could capture the flavor of this scene.

It was perfumed satins and torchlight on oiled bodies of slaves — giant Nubians and olive-skinned Greeks, and pale Saxon women from fogbound islands. It was purple wine spilled

across marble tiles — great vats of purple wine and heaped platters of exotic foods.

It was raw, displayed sex without shame or secret. Two naked men and one woman rolled in the shallow waters of the pool while others shouted suggestions. A shrieking girl was spread-eagled against a pillar, target for thrown fruits and cruel hands.

At the edge of the garden, a naked woman was hurled into a pit, and held there on hands and knees while a donkey was led up to straddle her.

On the floor, on couches, pairs and trios made open and violent love — and all the couples were not men and women. Joe shut his eyes and gulped his wine. Demonica's fevered hand closed on his arm. "Your slave dances well. Is she good in bed?"

Joe drained the goblet. Demonica giggled. "You turn red. Are the provincials so moral, then?"

"Not so moral — more private."

Demonica laughed. "It's more exciting, this way."

Taunting, whirling, Lyrice had worked her way through the crowd until she was near Joe again. One pivoting knee struck a lifted goblet and flung wine over a man. Demonica's hand tightened on Joe's arm.

Face twisted and dripping, Marius Vespasian leaped to his feet. From nowhere, a giant Nubian was at his side. At his master's signal, the slave lifted Lyrice and carried her kicking to a wine vat.

Demonica struggled to hold Joe as the Nubian splashed Lyrice into the vat. The crowd screamed in delight as her head was shoved below the surface.

Men and women scattered before Joe as he plunged forward. In the sudden, brittle quiet, the Nubian whirled to face him. Joe caught the gleam of torchlight on steel, and skidded to a stop.

Behind him, he heard the cold voice of Marius. "Rescue your slave — if you dare."

Joe didn't turn; his eyes were on the big slave, watching the massive, brutal face, the curved scimitar balanced over the man's right shoulder.

Slowly, Joe moved in. The Nubian was somehow familiar, the set of his small eyes, the way that right hand cocked back. Joe remembered.

Nearly two thousand years in the future, he had faced a man the twin of this one. It had been a stark, bright ring where faceless people sat beyond a circle of light. Joe remembered that other man's weakness.

Poised, he slid forward and flicked his left hand at this man's sweaty belly. Snake-swift, the blade chopped

Joe let his chin drop to his chest. It was better not to think about it, not to worry. From experience, he knew that many a fighter left his confidence in the dressing room.

A pug had to believe he was going to win, even when the record books told him another story, even when the smart money boys made the other guy a top-heavy favorite.

Joe grinned in the thick darkness. It wasn't too long ago, and not so far from this neighborhood that an amateur featherweight upset a big stumbler fighting under the name of Goliath.

Things could be worse. He might have been tossed into the arena with one of those hay forks and a fishnet. He could have been matched two falls out of three with a starving lion. This way, he had a chance. It might be a slim one, but it was a better break than he'd get any other way.

He rubbed his hands together, feeling the lumped knuckle on his right. He'd broken that one in Chicago against Billy Levine. What was Chicago now? A virgin forest and a tribe of Indians, and Billy Levine's great-grandparents hadn't been born yet. Briefly, Joe wondered if some inflexible rule of time and space would lead an-

other fighter to break a knuckle on Billy's hard head.

Far down the corridor, light flickered. Joe listened to the muffled rattle of approaching armor. The door swung back. Torchlight spilling around her, Demonica followed a guard inside.

A wiry centurion thrust the torch handle into a wall socket and closed the door behind himself. Demonica flung across the cell and flattened against Joe.

"The Emperor wouldn't listen to me," she said. "Not totally because of Marius. He wants to see the man who downed the Nubian face Cadra."

She was warm and pliant against him. Joe said nothing.

"Why did you bother about that slave girl," Demonica asked, "I would have given you what you paid for her."

"I thought I cared for her," Joe said.

"For a slave? Idiot — when I had such wonderful plans for you tonight. For both of us."

Joe watched the soft reflection of light dance in Demonica's ebony hair. "Have you come to help me get out of here?"

She lifted her face. "N-no. It's impossible. Marius knows I'm interested in you. If you escaped, he'd turn his brother against me. Tiberius would have me flayed."

Adam



"There's an amusement tax on the cigarettes in the back row, Mister."

Muscles clamped along Joe's jaws. "We could go away; I know places Romans have never seen."

Her mouth was petulant. "I said it was impossible. Take the next best thing, provincial — while you have the chance."

"The next best thing?"

"Me!"

Joe stared as the woman unfastened a jeweled pin at the shoulder of her gown. The diaphanous material drifted down, falling reluctantly away from high, arched breasts, caressing the satin curve of her stomach, sliding over flared hips to puddle at last about her feet.

Musky, vibrant, the woman-smell of her caught in his throat. Demonica swayed, cupping her buttocks in both hands, presenting her thrusting body to him.

Then she spoiled it.

"They thought to cheat me of you," she said, in the tone a child would use — a child whose toy had been taken to punish her.

"Take me," she whispered. "Take me — here, standing like this. Hurry, you fool, before the guards return."

Joe's teeth clicked together. This rotten, spoiled bitch wasn't worrying about him. She hadn't even thought about saving him from the arena. All her feelings were centered below her pelvic bone.

As he said it, he hoped the meaning was clear in Latin. Spacing his words, he told Demonica to do something biologically impossible to herself.

Her face darkened. "I command you to take me."

Joe spat on the floor and turned his back; it was a mistake. Her naked body hurled itself on his back; hooked fingers hooked around to claw at his eyes. She bit into his neck, mouthing curses into his flesh.

Joe twisted and caught her hair. There was something reptilian about her writhing body, about the snake-like hisses from her wet mouth. Joe slapped her to the floor.

Her maddened scream brought guards plunging into the cell, eyes wide at the naked body of the woman twisting and spitting on the stone.

The centurion moved Joe back at the point of his short sword.

"Kill him!" Demonica snarled.

"Sorry," the officer said. "Marius orders he be saved for Cadra."

"The dog tried to rape me!"

Joe looked down into her unpretty face. "No bitch in heat was ever raped."

A flicker of amusement crossed the centurion's face, but he kept his expression carefully somber. Demonica came erect, clutching her gown to her.

Cadra will beat that insolence out of you, provincial! I'll tell him the trick you used on the Nubian — how you pretended to strike low and stepped back. I'll tell him!"

She scurried out of the door and the centurion sheathed his sword. "I like you, savage. The Emperor's bitch can't understand why you refused her. But I can."

Joe stared at the man's scarred, wind-burned face. "Can you?"

A goldpiece glittered in the Roman's fingers. "Another woman paid this, to visit with you tonight."

Joe's mouth went dry. "Lyrice? A girl with dark gold hair?"

"She wears the band of a slave. Here — take back the gold."

"You won't let her in?"

"She will come, but seeing Demonica denied is worth twice as much. More than one Praetorian has suffered because of that bitch's temper."

Joe shook his head. "Keep the money, friend. After tomorrow, I may not have any use for it."

The centurion shrugged and dropped the coin into his purse. "You've never fought in the arena before?"

"Not here," Joe said, "not with cestus."

"You're big enough; as tall and wide as Cadra himself. Demonica goes now to tell him of your trick, so I'll tell you this: the Greek rushes swiftly; he holds with one arm and strikes with the other."

"Thanks," Joe said. "I'll remember that."

Thoughtfully, the centurion rubbed a hand over his short beard. "You said you never fought in Rome. In other places?"

"In many places."

"And you do not tremble with fear at meeting Cadra?"

"Fear never helped anybody to win a fight," Joe said.

The man clapped Joe on the shoulder. "By all the gods! You would have made a good legionnaire. I think I smell an omen; I'll wager this gold-piece and some silver against Cadra."

Joe's smile was wry. "I hope you collect."

"If I do, there's a place in the Praetorian guards for you."

"You mean — if I beat Cadra, I'll go free?"

"It's the custom," the centurion said. "Tiberius is many things, but the Emperor is fair — where gladiators are concerned."

Joe grinned. "That's something else good to know. Now about Lyrice —"

"The girl. Yes, of course. But — not in excess, eh? It's said a man can be weakened that way."

They laughed together to the door

in minutes, it opened again to admit a pale, frightened Lyrice. Joe held out his hands to her, and she came softly into them.

He remembered how the girl had been defiant on the slave block, how she had been ready to fight him at the inn. Now she was afraid, but not for herself — for Joe Rain.

"I fled," she said. "I ran with your purse, because Marius would have told the soldiers to take me, too."

"I didn't think of that," he murmured into her hair.

"Even for all your gold, the centurion would not let you free."

"He couldn't. It would mean his life."

Her shoulders quivered under his hands. "Don't cry," he said.

"I weep for both of us," Lyrice whispered, "and for a beautiful thing to be slain so soon after it was born."

Softwarm and lovely, she pressed against him. "Justun, my love —"

His mouth brushed hers and tasted tears and a deep sorrow. Slowly, his hands searched over her body, moulding familiar roundness, stroking remembered curves. Her mouth stirred under his. "You will need your strength."

"I would rather lose the fight."

Then there were no words, and no need for any. Lyrice's fair skin gleamed in the flickering light from the wall torch, but the light in her eyes was brighter.

She was not familiar, but wholly new. This time, her body didn't attack his, didn't demand. The wildness of her was gone, and in its place came a warm giving, a sweet gentleness that made her more girl than woman.

Lyrice was down-soft breasts and silken stomach beneath him; she was a honeyed mouth and tender thighs receiving him, cloaking and hiding him in warmth waves of sublime passion.

And later, much later, when the torch had burned out and the first pink gropings of dawn fingered along the corridor outside, Lyrice moved away from him. "I must go."

Joe murmured something into the base of her throat.

"Perhaps I can bribe Cadra," she said.

"Stay away from him," Joe said. "If I lose today, use the money to buy passage back to Gaul."

"There is nothing in Gaul for me," Lyrice said softly. "Life is where you are."

They heard guards awakening outside the cell, heard the thunk of helmets and a muttered curse. Lyrice slipped back into her dress.

- turn the page

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"I will be near," she promised, and was gone when the door opened for her.

THE CENTURION winked as he brought Joe a hearty breakfast, "To protect a wager."

Joe nodded his thanks and fell to. When he had wiped the bowls clean, he looked up. "There's another thing you can do to protect your goldpiece. If I had a pair of cestus, I could get used to them."

"Done! There's plenty of time before we take you to the arena. Practice well, but don't tire yourself."

When the leather wrappings were brought, Joe hefted them and whistled softly. There were no spikes, as he had expected, but oblong weights, instead. Weighing about two pounds each, they were lead, curved to fit across the knuckles. A solid punch with one of them could crush a man's skull.

The centurion wound the wrappings about Joe's arms and helped him fit the cestus into place. The things were bulky, unfamiliar.

Joe lifted his hands and moved around, trying a jab. Held back by the weight, the hand was too slow, too clumsy. On his toes, he moved about the cell, pivoting and hooking.

The cestus dragged his hands down,

cutting their speed, making him carry them lower than he liked.

The centurion shook his head. "Never have I seen a gladiator hop around like that. I wonder about my goldpiece."

Joe dropped his hands and breathed deeply. "There are different ways of fighting. But I don't think I can handle these things; there's too much weight."

"But you must use the same cestus Cadra uses — like these."

"Can I use nothing at all? Just cloth around my hands?"

"No rule against it; but you'll be helpless."

Joe worked out of the cestus. Next he tore his tunic into strips. "Where I fought, these are called hand wraps. Without them, it's too easy to break a hand."

"With them, Cadra will break your skull."

Joe stretched out to rest. "We'll see. Be sure and wake me up in time, won't you?"

The officer chuckled. "If confidence will win over the Greek, you'll soon be a free man."

Alone in his cell, Joe wondered if he was really as unworried as he sounded. Time was running out; in less than eight hours, the gateway to his own world would appear in a certain alley.

He had to beat Cadra, get out of the arena and find that alley again before the gateway faded. Joe didn't puzzle over his problems for long. The night had been too full, and he fell asleep.

HIS EYES snapped open at the feel of the centurion's hand on his shoulder. He waved away an offered wineskin and asked for water instead. Joe wrapped his hands, carefully folding the woolen strip between each finger, padding it across his knuckles, using teeth to help him knot the cloth around his wrist.

The wraps felt different, without tape, but they would hold. He'd always made it a point to wrap his own hands, even before this. In how many dressing rooms — how many times pressing the last bit of tape into place, hearing the crowd yell at the pre-liminary boys in the ring?

The times didn't matter now — only the fact that each time Joe had climbed through the ropes, he had come out knowing a little more. Even the last time, when he had learned he didn't have quite what it took to be the champion.

But now? Joe stood up, feeling the notebook crammed with scribbling tucked into his loin cloth. He flexed his arms, pumped them a few times, and rolled his head on his neck.

Now? Joe Rain would soon find out how good the first boxers were. Maybe he'd live to compare a primitive style to a modern method; maybe not.

A squad of spearmen waited in the corridor to ring him in. Joe had to grin; the promoter of this main event was taking no chances on a run-out. In step, looking straight ahead, the soldiers moved him across a courtyard and into a tunnel.

Masonry ordered by the first Caesar arched overhead as they paced along the tunnel's length and came to a big room. Joe heard the muted rumble of many voices overhead, and knew he was beneath the Coliseum, death-place of numberless men.

He glanced curiously about the room, at the men sprawled waiting on rough wooden benches. The gladiators were of many races and colors. Some were armored and helmeted; some furred nets and tested the balance of pronged tridents.

Others paced the room like caged cats, carrying war axes or broadswords. Once more, Joe was thankful he didn't have to face anyone with a weapon.

Or anything. He corrected himself as the roar of a lion thundered overhead. Man against man, and man against beast. Cruel, barbaric, the entertainments of ancient Rome made its vaunted glories insignificant. But was



it really any different from his own time? More men died in the rice paddies of Korea than in a dozen Roman campaigns.

Methodically, he went about the process of warming up, working slowly and calmly until fine sweat oiled his body. The thoughts of his own century stayed with him — the hectic, scared world somewhere far along the rubber band of time, with the shadow of The Bomb dark across it.

True, most of the Romans were vicious and heartless. But swords, spears and animals could destroy only so many men. Ah, but The Bomb — it could snap the entire race of man from existence as if he had never been. Which was more vicious, which era more heartless?

Joe settled down to little skipping motions with his feet. Someone laughed, and he looked into the hairy face of a Saxon. "Will you dance Cadra to death, then?" the man asked.

The laugh echoed through the room, for the gladiators were glad to get away from their own thoughts. Joe shrugged.

The Saxon rumbled deep in his chest, "Three hundred and ninety-nine men have fallen before Cadra. He says he will play awhile with the four hundred — in celebration."

Joe continued to skip. "I'll help him celebrate — on his grave."

The centurion beat his hands against his thighs. "I said he doesn't fear Cadra! Savage — make the champion eat his words."

The Saxon hitched ragged skins about his waist. "He has his hands wrapped in wool. Is he going to bind Cadra with it?"

"A strange custom," the centurion admitted.

The resounding blare of trumpets keened into the room, and a studded door swung wide. Through it, Joe could see the white sands of the arena, hard-packed by countless, frantic feet and the hungry weight of animals.

A man in leather armor motioned with the knotted thongs of the whip he held. "Justun — the opponent of Cadra."

"May the gods be with you," the centurion said.

Joe moved through the door and out into bright sunlight. Blinking, he looked about him, hearing the high, eager noise of a thousand throats. Across the sands was the figure of a man. Beyond him, high up on the walls, the flutter of purple rippled in a breeze.

The Emperor Tiberius was in his box. Joe walked toward it; seeking the face of Demonica, the face of Marius — both avid for the sight of Joe's

blood.

And Lyrice? "I'll be near," she had said. She was close by. He knew her gold-flecked eyes were watching him, that she was praying to whatever gods she knew to help him.

The crowd roared, its multi-voiced thunder mounting, and Joe saw Cadra standing straight and tall below the Emperor's box. The man was big and muscled, and he was shouting something up to his master, holding his weighted fist high over his dark head in salute.

Joe hesitated, then went to stand beside the Greek and lift his arm in the same manner. But there was a difference. Joe's fingers cupped together with his thumb in a sign any Italian of his own time would have immediately recognized. The motion was certainly no humble salute.

Tiberius smiled from his parapet and waved a limp hand. Horns pealed across the arena; the crowd fell silent.

Swelling his great chest, Cadra turned to face Joe, and grinned in supreme confidence. Joe watched the man's hands, saw the brutal cestus swing up and into position. Cadra lifted his hands shoulder high and held them there as if he carried hammers in them.

Joe eased away on his toes, the white of his bandaged hands conspicuously without metal on them. The crowd buzzed, but now it was a wordless enmity sprawling beyond the limits of Joe's vision and hearing. Crowds were always like that, after the bell rang.

Cadra didn't move those killing hands, but kept them cocked and ready. Joe circled away from the Greek, looking at the man's face, his mind registering the fact that Cadra had been hit before. Scar tissue told Joe a story of punches that had landed on the right side of the Greek's head in other battles.

Well, Professor Gibbons and the Marquis of Queensbury, Joe thought, here goes. His left hand flicked out and landed with a snap over Cadra's right eye. He slid away from the counterpunch as the Greek roared and leaped at him with a flattening right hand.

Cautiously, Joe bicycled. The big man had speed of his own; one good punch from that lead-wrapped hand, and Joe Rain would never be the same. His left jab popped Cadra's head back.

The Greek ducked and tried to get his own left arm around Joe's middle. Joe skipped back and brought Cadra's head up with a savage chop, sending a word of thanks for the warning he'd had about this trick.

Again and again, the left whipped in — good, sharp jabs, but without the

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power needed to stop the Greek. The punches kept him stung and off balance, but Joe would have to open up to stagger the man.

He remembered Demonica's final, spitting threat — that she would tell the Greek how Joe had feinted the Nubian into swinging his blade.

Joe suddenly came down off his toes and feinted at Cadra's body. The man hurled his right fist through the air, expecting Joe to bob up as he had against the slave. Instead, Joe pulled his head behind his shoulder and drove a gut-tearing hook deep into the belly.

Cadra reeled back, sucking for air. Joe followed him, leaning into a short right. Lights sparked behind his eyes and his legs went loose at the knees. Habit and long-instilled reflexes moved him swiftly back and out of trouble until his head cleared.

Dancing away while the crowd called and booed, Joe shook off the pain. The rabbit punch had damned near unjointed his neck. Cadra was strong as a yoke of bulls.

Joe stumbled, deliberately. He let his hand sag and his mouth fall open. Playing dead dog might be the oldest stunt in the books, but there was a possibility of it working here.

It did. Cadra came in with his arms wide. Joe's straight right smashed the man's teeth and turned his grin crimson. Cadra fell forward and Joe felt stone scrape across his back. The wall — he had let himself get pinned against the wall!

Sickening agony lanced through his belly as the Greek drove a knee into his groin. Instinctively, Joe lowered his head and butted a gash over Cadra's eye. Dazed, eyes blurred, all the old, desperate tricks came back to him — the dirty, hidden lessons taught to him in tank towns where referees looked the other way.

Joe heeled Cadra's head back sharply, and hooked a thumb into his eye. A hoarse scream ripped from the Greek's broken mouth, and he released Joe to paw at his face.

Gaspings, Joe slid away. His legs were turning to lifeless sticks; his groin ached; ribs must have cracked under the terrible power of Cadra's arms.

The Greek swayed on widespread feet. Joe's thumb had ruined his left eyeball; the gashed eyebrow poured blood over it and down his face. Half-blind, Cadra was a long way from being finished. More cautious, more deliberate, he plodded after Joe.

Joe stuck him, opening the skin with ripping jabs, drifting away from blind swings and staying on the Greek's dark side, sticking, sticking, until the face under his knuckles felt like a wet

sponge.

Cadra gathered himself for a terrific punch that would have torn Joe's head off, if it had landed. Tottering off balance, Cadra's good eye presented a perfect target for Joe's right. He fired it down the middle, grunting into the punch from his foot up.

It landed low, under the eye instead of over it, and Joe felt bone splinter against his fist. Cadra went down, Joe moved back out of the reach of the man's hands and waited.

The crowd's yelping penetrated for a moment. They were screaming at Joe — "Kill his head in! Kill him! Kill his head in!"

Joe pulled quick breaths of air into his lungs and let his hands dangle. Cadra struggled slowly to his feet. Joe moved to meet him, and was nearly caught by his own stunt — by the old dead dog trick.

The Greek's foot lashed out and jolted against Joe's hip bone. A few inches lower, and he would have been crippled. He staggered back, the moment of pity he had felt for the Greek dissolving. This was no ring, but an arena where the quality of mercy was unknown.

Joe slid close and pumped the left over Cadra's eye. A chopping right over the heart drove the Greek back. Joe was after him, hooking to the jaw, driving a right into the guts, down low.

Cadra's head snapped down over the pain in his body, and Joe hammered a looping punch into the back of his exposed neck. The Greek's blood-smeared face drove itself hard into grating sand.

Again Joe waited, the avid pleas of the crowd beating about him. Straining, grunting, Cadra pushed himself to his knees. The man's head wobbled on his bull neck, but he came slowly to his feet. Joe darted in and closed his good eye with a ripping punch.

Blinded, helpless now, the Greek pawed the air. His face was gory; livid welts from the body shots puffed scarlet over his ribs. The great arms sagged, the cestus fell until they swung at his sides. Cadra waited for death.

Joe wiped sweat from his eyes and looked up at the royal box. He saw the white faces of Demonica and Marius, the inane smile on the lips of Tiberius. The Emperor raised his right hand, thumb pointed down.

Joe nodded and moved to Cadra, his right hand cocked. The Greek heard the scuff of sandals on sand, and turned his ruined face toward Joe. He held his back straight.

Measuring the distance to Cadra's chin, Joe threw the final punch. But in the last fragment of time, he pulled it, riding the fist with only a shoulder,

without the full weight of his body.

The Greek fell face down, and Joe knew he would not move for a long time. But he was alive; his unwavering courage had earned that much. When the time came, Joe Rain didn't have the cold thing in him — the hard thing needed to kill a helpless man.

Something round and leafy spun out of the Emperor's box and fell in the sand at his feet. Joe stared at it for a moment. It was an olive wreath, traditional symbol of victory. It was a crown.

Joe stretched tired lips. It had been a long way around, but Joe Rain was champion of the world. He didn't feel any different. Suddenly he knew he wouldn't have felt any different if he had taken the championship in his own time. The applause of a pack of mongrels and a bitter taste in a man's mouth — that's all it meant.

Hands were on him now, and the yelling face of the centurion pushed into his own. "You did it, savage! By the gods — you did it!"

"Can I walk out of here? Am I free?"

"Of course! Didn't Tiberius himself throw you the olive wreath?"

Joe draped one sore arm about the centurion's shoulder and leaned on him. "And Lyrice — the slave girl?"

"Waiting at the gate. Look at Demonica's face — she's strangling in her own poison!"

"Take me to the gate," Joe said.

A line of Praetorian Guards applauded Joe as he passed them, rattling spears against their shields, grinning hugely at the sight of one of their own so friendly with the hero of the day. Joe didn't look at them; he was searching for Lyrice.

She was there, the haven of warm arms outstretched, and Joe went sighing into them. But not for long; something pushed at him, prodded his tired mind until he lifted his face from her hair.

The time warp — the alley where the gateway into his own world would soon appear. He squinted at the sun. How long before the professor closed switches in his laboratory? How many minutes before the air in a deserted alley would turn hazy blue and crackle with an unseen power?

Joe had to find it — had to hurry to the gap into 1960, to regain a modern, civilized world without gladiators and bloody arenas, without Emperors whose whims meant life and death. Joe caught at Lyrice's arm and half-dragged her through the streets.

"That marketplace," he gasped, "the place where you were sold. Which way is it?"

She stumbled beside him, trying to

look up into his face. "Through here — this way — but why? Why?"

"I can't explain," Joe said, and bulled their way through a group of merchants.

"Tell me."

Words bounced out of Joe's mouth as he ran. "You said I was strange — I am, because I'm not of your time."

He caught a ragged glimpse of her white face. "Can you understand that? I come from another time — from many years in the future, where the whole world is changed."

Lyrice was panting. "Here — this way. There's the slave market, across the square. What do you mean — from the future?"

Joe hurried her across the square, searching for the one alley he had marked in his mind. There it was, facing the vintner's stall. Pulling the girl with him, he leaped into its entrance and ran to the end.

Dropping Lyrice's hand, he felt of the stone walls, felt chisel marks deep in the hand-hewn stone. This was the place, but had he come too late?

"Justun," Lyrice's voice was small and frightened at his elbow.

He watched the stone, "Not Justun — not Justun of Macedonia, but Joe Rain of America, a country that will flourish in the year nineteen hundred and sixty."

The girl's hand flew to her mouth; her eyes were wide. "I — I do not understand —"

"I said you wouldn't."

Dammit, Joe thought, had the mesh gate into the civilized world come and gone, leaving him forever stranded in a barbaric century?

"You travel in time — by some magic?" Lyrice asked.

"Yes — but if we got here too late, nothing can help us. I can never go home."

Her hand was featherlight on his arm, "Justun — Joe —"

"Yes?" His eyes were fixed on the wall.

"Does a woman wait for you — in your own time?"

He shook his head. The last woman had shaken loose from a pug on the way down. What good was a has-been without a bankroll?

There it was!

The faint haze of tremendous power strained to force itself into the rubber band of time, focused in unimaginable force on this century, this immovable moment of *now*.

The wall seemed to tremble, to waver slightly. Deep and low, something hummed, and the fine wire mesh of the gateway came nebulously into being.

Joe snatched the notes he had gath-

ered out of his loin cloth and threw them into the opening. He heard faint sounds, a muffled voice: "Hurry, Joe . . ."

Another voice was at his ear. "I love you, Joe."

He leaned into the haze, seeing great outlines of great machines, seeing a ghost-face. "Professor — professor!"

"Hurry, Joe . . . the power can't hold . . ."

"I have a woman with me! Can she come through, too?"

The answer was clear. "No."

"She's got to come with me!"

The haze shimmered, Professor Gibbons' face rippled. "There's only power for one — quickly . . ."

Joe's head moved back. Desperately, he looked at the girl. Calm, clear and touched with sadness, Lyrice's eyes held his. The professor's voice came weakly through the gateway: "Joe!"

Through that haze was the world Joe knew, the one he was a part of. Or was he? There, he'd have to start over, knowing now that no man was meant to batter another with his fists.

And there The Bomb waited for the touch of a madman's fingertip against a button — a world that never really knew a man named Joe Rain existed — a time of lacquered women, used often as a ring apron, hard as old scar tissue. What waited in that time for Joe?

Joe leaned once more into the fading haze. "I'm staying here."

He never knew if Professor Gibbons answered. Whatever magic machines had built up such monumental power had tired, and let it slip. The gateway into time dissolved, leaving only the rough-hewn stone of a Roman wall behind it.

"The magic failed," Lyrice said.

"No, I wanted to stay with you."

Her glad cry was muffled against his mouth. "Your gold," she said, "more than you know — you can be rich."

Joe's thoughts leaped ahead. Enough gold to buy a ship and hire men to man it — enough to take them far away from the cruelty of the Roman Empire.

He laughed aloud, thinking that of all the learned men of this time, he was the only one who knew of green, glorious places, emerald islands drowsing in tropic sun — islands whose people were gentle. With Joe Rain to point the way, any ship could reach them.

"Joe," Lyrice said, "you will not regret? You won't be sorry you didn't go back to your own world, your own time? It must be a very wonderful time."

Joe looked down at the wonder of Lyrice. "Today is time enough," he said.



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**Daring blonde beauty
overcomes her basic
phobias to launch
many-sided career.**





UPSTAIRS,
from page 13

have her seeing a solid character like you, Joe, than cutting around town. But you don't fit the picture. You're a strongback, Joe. What kind of dough will you be making when your muscles get tired?"

"I'll be a foreman by then," I said. "A foreman!" She almost spit it at me. "I'm not going to have my Angie any foreman's wife. I didn't raise her for that."

"She's nineteen," I said. "She's of age. If she wants to marry me, and I want to marry her, you can't stop us."

"I should have known better," she said, dropping her cigarette in the ashtray and getting up off my bed. Then her face got real hard, and she looked down at me lying there and said, "Maybe I can stop you and maybe I can't—but I'm sure as hell going to try. Why not give my little girl a chance, Joe—especially if you love her like she says you love her?"

I said, "Isn't that up to her and me?" — and Sal got out of there fast.

When I picked up Angie that night, I could tell right away I wasn't the only one Sal had talked to. For the first time since we got together, we didn't go back to the house—we'd been using either my room or hers, depending upon whether Sal was in or not. She said, "Take me somewhere—just for a drive."

We parked when we got to a good place. I said, "Something eating you, honey? Has your mother been making you unhappy?"

She acted like I'd stung her. Then she said, "Has mom been talking to you, too?"

"Tonight," I told her. "What's all this jazz about her not wanting us to get married?"

Angie said, "Oh, Joe!" — and flung her arms around me and began to cry. I held her close until she was cried out.

Then I said, "So what's stopping us? Let's get married."

"But I can't!" she almost wailed. "I owe mom money."

"That's crazy," I said. "How can you owe your mother money?"

"But I do—two thousand dollars. It was dough somebody left her, and she spent it on me. I—it's hard to explain, but I can't cut loose owing her like that. And I haven't got it."

"I got some," I told her, "and I can borrow more." Right away, I began figuring who I could put the arm on.

"No, Joe!" She shook her head until her dark hair flew around it, there in the moonlight. "I'm not letting you go into debt over me."

"Then," I said, "let's you and me both work like little beavers and get it up. It shouldn't take too long."

She grabbed me close again, and her big eyes were like saucers. "You mean that, honey? You really mean it?" she said.

"Damn right!" I told her. "Can you think of a better reason?"

She said, nuzzling me with her chin, "It's going to mean we can't see each other so much for a while. But if we both work overtime all we can . . ."

"Come on, honey," I told her gently. "I'm taking you home to get some rest. We got us a hard pull ahead."

I talked to the boss the next day, and he put me on the graveyard shift, which meant about twenty more bucks a week, and agreed to give me all the overtime I could handle—he was a real nice guy as long as he didn't think you were laying down on him. I had a few hundred in the bank, and I figured I could do my part and maybe a little more in about a month.

Meanwhile, Angie talked herself into some overtime, too, so we figured we had it made. Sal didn't like it, but like I said, there was nothing she could do. I'd never thought much about marriage before, but now I couldn't think of anything else.

There was only one flaw in the ointment—what with the two of us working different shifts, and both of us putting in extra time, we didn't get to see each other hardly at all. With my shift to graveyard, Sundays was all we could wangle, and not much of them. We were both so dead by then, we didn't have much left for each other.

At first, I didn't mind. I was using up plenty on the job, and I figured it was worth it. But show me the guy who can take a shut-off after he's been getting what I'd been getting regular as clockwork without feeling a reaction.

By the end of the second week of it, I was beginning to feel like I'd been stuck in a desert outpost for maybe a couple of years. I mean, I was even looking and feeling hungry when I drove by the movie houses with their big displays of the Hollywood sexpots. I took to dropping into Pete's more often. I was careful, on account of us trying to save dough, but I did a lot more drinking than I like to, out of sheer frustration.

The third Angie-less Saturday night rolled around, and I was really up to here! I got in there, and what made it worse, the boys were all steamed up over what Pete had going for him in the room upstairs. Even the Professor had

given it a try and was discussing the great whores of history, like Cleopatra and all. As for Dino Wilson, he was steaming.

"Man!" he said. "Man, you just don't know. At five bucks a trick, it costs dough, but if sure'n hell is worth it!"

I tried not to listen, and had myself another drink. But I couldn't help noticing how, one by one, all the regulars at the bar were making the trek to the stairs, and I couldn't help seeing how they looked, and hearing what they said, when they came staggering back down. I tried to think hard of Angie and of what we had ahead of us, but I couldn't seem to get the picture in focus.

Finally, when Dino Wilson came down after a second trip, I'd had it. I gave Pete the sign, and he shrugged and nodded, and I went up those stairs for the first time. The hallway was pretty grubby, but when the broad opened the door, I could see he had the room itself fixed up pretty nice. The light was pretty dim, and it took me a moment to see what was what.

When I got a load of the broad who was working the joint, I flipped. She had stepped back and put her hands on her hips and was looking at me the same way I was looking at her. All she said was, "You son-of-a-bitch!"

Yecah—for one awful moment, I'd thought it was Angie, but it was Sal, her mother, instead. Quite a revelation for both of us. I said, "Things have been rough the last few weeks, and when I heard the boys talking downstairs, I . . ." Right then I ran out of words.

"You son-of-a-bitch!" she said again.

"Okay," I said, "so what are you doing here, Sal?"

"Just what you think," she replied. "What I've been doing all my life. Now maybe you see why I'm not so keen on her marrying you."

"Yeah," I said. "Yeah, maybe I do. But get this through your Goddam head—I'm marrying her, and I'm going to take care of her as long as I live."

"I guess you will at that," she said, which was quite an admission coming from her, under the circumstances.

"Why in hell are you putting out like this?" I asked her. "Angie and I are raising quite a nut for you."

"I'm going to need all I can get," she told me, "and I've got to get it while I can. I'm not going to be a burden to you kids, that I can promise you. When I remember my old woman . . ."

"Okay," I said. I got out ten bucks and tossed them on a table. "I been taking up enough of your time, Sal." And then I turned and walked out. I was still shaken, but in a way I didn't mind. At least, with what I knew, I could always handle Sal.

Between a cheating woman and a blood hungry husband, I faced a fate worse than death

Gifthorse

by GENE FARLEY



IF I'D USED my head at all, I should have known Margo was poison. When you've been around as long as I have, you know even the best-meaning broad in the world can be any man's headache and ulcer-builder. But when you see one like Margo, with that smooth complexion and those amused, bold eyes, and the long, full upper-lip and extra arch to her nostrils, you know, or ought to know, that you're dealing with pure poison.

The only trouble is, when one of these gals makes a set at you, your relative position is that of a fly suddenly assailed by a large piece of fly-paper. It looks sweet, it smells sweet, it feels sweeter, so that, by the time you've come to and want out, brother, you're caught with fair.

I met her at a dull company cocktail bing to welcome me as the new branch manager.

Sometimes, right from the first when you meet a dame, you know you don't have to play it smart or cool or any of that jazz. You're in like Flynn, and you know it and so does she. I didn't have to be an expert on women to know what

was stirring in back of the slanting hazel eyes. The way they hooked onto mine, the way her nostrils dilated ever so slightly, gave me the score. And, after all, I knew how I felt right then.

When I got a chance, I said, "Busy later?" She shook her head, still not taking her eyes from mine, and I said, "Are you in the book?" That was all. She left, maybe twenty minutes later, and when she shook hands with me I discovered a folded piece of paper in my mitt. It had her number on it.

When I got back to the town's one half-decent hotel, I called her. She said, "I've been waiting to hear from you. Do you want me to pick you up?"

ONCE I WAS with her in her trim little sportscar, we didn't waste time looking for a moon. She drove me to a motel, maybe ten or fifteen miles out of town. It was close to midnight by the time we checked in and had everything shipshape.

It was a dive, but I didn't look at our romantic environment. Instead, I looked at her. She laughed a little as she came into my arms, there in the cabin, and it

seemed to catch in her throat. She said, very low, "I must be crazy, doing this."

I pulled her close and said, "If you are, it makes two of us." And that was all either of us said for quite a while.

She got out of the green silk dress, and the few bits of lace and nylon she was wearing underneath, with the grace of a trained dancer—the pride in and of body and the ability to project it as a part of self that only a few dancers and athletes ever learn.

IT WAS STILL DARK, and still raining, when Margo drove me back to the hotel. She didn't say any more, and neither did I till we got there. Then she looked at me, and her eyebrows went up, and she said just the one word, "When?"

"Tonight," I told her. Beat as I was, I still wanted her like crazy. "It may be late—I'm not punching a clock."

"You have my number," she said. I got out and she drove off without even a good-bye kiss.

THE FUNNY THING was, even though I was beating Margo and myself to a —turn the page

HORSE, from page 77

frazzle every night, and living on benzene days, I never operated better than I did those ten days when things were really winging in high. I got hold of the factory situation fast and made all the right moves—I didn't even have to do any heavy firing to get the branch rolling again. Just recommended a few transfers and promoted a half-dozen characters who could handle things the way the home office wanted.

Another funny thing—although I was with Margo in that lousy motel eight of those ten nights, I never did find out a hell of a lot about her except that she was a terrific gal in the hay. I guess we were too busy to waste time talking—or maybe she was afraid if she talked it would spoil things. This was really a red-hot sex deal, and everything else between us was secondary. Or so I thought...

I knew in a vague way Margo was married, but she never pressed the point, so I took it for granted she and her husband had reached some sort of understanding. It wasn't until the day before our last big time together that I was given the score—and then I didn't get it from her. I got it from Marvin Wilstache.

Marvin was the chief piece of dead wood I had to clear out of the active branch management to move the job. A nice, grey-haired, handsome guy every-

body loved, but who had slid over the peak and become a real clunker in the path of progress. If I'd bounced him, I'd have had the whole branch against me, and I was smart enough to know it. So I wangled him a kicking upstairs instead of out, with a supervisory and consultative capacity over a much larger territory. That way, we could use his experience and have his productive incapacity out of the way.

Still, I was a little surprised when he asked me to lunch. After all, however it looked and paid, it was a demotion, and both of us knew it. He'd have been perfectly right to feel sore at me. But, instead, he asked me to lunch, so I had to accept.

We ate in the men's grill of the local country-club, and over dessert he opened up. "Don't try to cover up," he said with a sort of sad smile. "You've spent seven out of the last nine nights with Margo at that lousy motel just off the highway." He must have read my expression, because he said. "No need to get sore, Harry—this isn't New York or Chicago. Everybody knows what everybody else does, especially if it's sex."

"So what?" I told him. "She's of age, and so am I. If we did decide to have a ball, what's it got to do with anybody else?"

"Well," said Wilstache, "there's Phil, for one. He's due back in town tomor-

row, and a number of 'best' friends are all primed to tell him what's been going on while he was vacationing up North."

"Phil . . . ?" I said, not taking it in.

"Margo's husband," he replied. "He's jealous as a sore boil."

"So why'd he leave her here alone and go off somewhere else?"

"Because he's the rugged, outdoor type, and he goes out of his mind in a town like this if he can't get away," was the reply. "Margo hates the woods. She went with him once—never again."

"Okay," I said, feeling my first bit of unease. I was wondering, if this Phil blew up a real storm, whether I'd be stuck with Margo and whether I could stand her on a permanent basis. I hadn't allowed myself to think about it from this angle before. Then I added to Wilstache, "So what am I supposed to do?"

"Frankly," he said, "if I were you, I'd be afraid of him."

"Well, I'm not," I said. "If I let him make me leave town, and the home office ever heard of it, I'd be cooked."

"Suit yourself," she said with a shrug. "But don't say I didn't warn you. All I can add is to be careful—and that I'm very sorry."

THAT EVENING, when Margo picked me up, I told her what Wilstache had said.

She laughed and gave me a look of contempt and said, "I can handle Phil. But, as far as I'm concerned, he's finished. What I'm thinking about is us."

"Us?" I asked. "What about us? We're both of age. We got into this thing with our eyes open. It's been a ball, but—"

"But you've had it, Harry—right?" she interrupted with a glint of green in her slanting eyes. "You've had all you want from me, and now you're ready to leave me high and dry. Is that it?"

"Not the way you're putting it," I told her, beginning to feel embarrassed. "But the way it is now, nobody loses."

"In a pig's eye!" she exploded. "Maybe you don't, but what about me? You're running off and leaving me here, stranded high and dry in this creep of a town, with all its evil-minded little foul-mouthed gossips just waiting to tear me to pieces! If that's what you think, Harry, you've got another think coming."

"But with your husband coming back," I said, changing front fast, "we can't go on the way we've been going. So let's not spoil our last free night by fighting, okay honey?"

"I told you I could handle Phil," she murmured, but she put the car in gear and drove fast the rest of the way.

Maybe it was because she wanted to show me what I'd be missing in not

Adam



"Oh I know it's bad form—but they seem to snap out of it sooner on their backs!"

taking her away with me . . . maybe it was because she was worked up over our affair coming to a close so soon . . . or maybe she was just working off her anger . . . Whatever caused it, she really went crazy that night in the old motel.

I turned over against the flyspecked cabin wall, gasping for breath. I'd never been as completely sandblasted and washed out in my whole life. Then she began shaking me and saying, "Harry, it's your last chance. Take me with you."

All I could say was, "Not now, baby. We can talk about it later. But right now I need some sleep."

She didn't say another word, just lay there beside me, and I must have dozed off right away. I was really dead to the world then, even if I'd been in the mood for more of Margo's brand of madness.

I woke up stark naked, of course — since that was the way I'd gone to sleep. Don't ask me how much later — I never did find out. But it was the God-damnedest nightmare I've ever had, except that this one was for real. Christ, was it for real!

This big, rough-bearded character was there in the room, just getting out of a plaid lumber shirt. Margo, nude as a jaybird, was half-sitting, half-lying against the wall, where he had flung her. Blood was running down her chin from a cut lip. But she wasn't screaming or crying. Instead, she was watching the man silently with her eyes gleaming like a hunting cat's.

"What the hell . . . ?" I said, sitting up, stupid as any man just roused out of a sound sleep.

Then Margo was standing, wiping the blood from her chin, and saying, "So just what do you think you're trying to prove?"

Her words cut like a knife. I had to admire the contempt, the insolence, the downright guts in her attitude toward this Tarzan she had married. But he said, without looking at her, "Shut up, you bitch. I've had it. I can't turn my back on you without finding you shackled up with some stud. I heard about you and this New York crumb two days ago and got down here fast. Now I'm going to see to it he doesn't do it to anyone else."

He stepped out of his pants — I guess he had some idea of not getting blood on his clothes — and stood there in his skivvies, with a six-inch hunting blade in his right hand.

"Just because you're not man enough to do it to me or anyone else," she said to him, still cool and crisp and contemptuous, "you're going to take it out on a better man."

Maybe she was crisp and cool and

contemptuous, but I was anything but. I was in a panic. I'd seen too many guys in Korea, after they'd been emasculated by land mines or mortar-shell fragments — and heard them screaming — to want it to happen to me. The only trouble was, I knew this character could take me, even without a knife.

Also, even in that time of terror, I began to understand Margo. She'd been a target, like Wilstache said, for every male in the county for years, and she'd married the biggest and best she could find, probably for protection as well as sexual satisfaction — and he hadn't made the grade. It was easy to see how she'd grown desperate enough to grab at any man who gave her the chance. It was easy to see why her husband took off when he could and hid out in the woods under the excuse of hunting.

But none of that helped me just then. I had to do something, and do it quick, or this madman was going to castrate me where I lay. He had picked up a roll of heavy bicycle tape, and I didn't need written directions to know what he was planning to do with that. I braced myself to get up, and my left hand slipped off the edge of the mattress, and felt the handle of Margo's bag beside the bed. It was heavy and had a metal frame and was weighted with all the junk women always fill their bags with.

If I could only divert his attention for a moment . . . But then Margo did

it for me.

She said, "You poor, impotent weakling . . ."

What else she meant to say I never did know. Apparently, the words "impotent weakling" triggered something deep inside him — something sure did. For he turned from me and flung himself toward her with a sobbing snarl. I got up off the bed and swung that bag like a battle-axe, hitting him over the head with it, smashing its sharp corners into his temples and around his eyes until he crumpled to the floor, a bloody mess.

I'd moved quick, but not quick enough. When I looked at Margo, she was pressed back against the wall, looking down at the hilt of the hunting knife, protruding sideways from between her breasts. She looked up at me then, and smiled and tried to say something, but only blood came from her lips. Then her eyes began to glaze and she slid back to her sitting position. I'd seen too many people die not to know this was it . . .

I'm not with the same corporation now, of course. In fact, I'm not even in the same line of work. They've got Phil locked up somewhere, as criminally insane. And nowadays, when I meet a woman who's pure poison, like Margo, I get the hell out of there as fast as I can. There are plenty of other kinds of women, thank God, just like there are plenty of fish in the sea.

Adam



"NO."





New Hollywood sexpot Ann Atmar sets goal on starring role of controversial novel

LOLITA IN THE FLESH

WHAT ANNIE WANTS, Annie Atmar usually gets. Now this cat-like youngster is pitching hard for the top sex role of the century, the part of *Lolita*, in the controversial film soon to be made in Hollywood. "I know I can play that illicit affair between a 12-year-old gal and a 40-year-old man better than anyone," she drawled. The drawl is from San Antonio, Texas.

"And down there," she says, "there's nothing interesting but the Alamo, and I've taken that a dozen times," she laughed.

At 15 Annie, who can look 30, or 12, went to New York, used her guiles and acting ability to get on a local TV show and forthwith became its hostess. Nightly she startled sophisticated New York audiences on station WOR-TV, the Ted Steele show, and she did it for five months. When she left, so many men wrote sorrowfully to the sponsors asking for her return that she seriously considered doing so; but Hollywood and that one role were the current gleam in her feline eyes; and Annie was out to get what she wanted most!

The minute her short, svelte presence hit the glamor town, Ann was cast in a quickie movie, called "The Street Fighters," as yet unreleased.





"Although I played the part of a juvenile delinquent," Ann said, "I am an accomplished actress, or will be someday. You know," she continued, "people think I look like Ella Raines who was a star a few years ago, but ah've never seen her." Annie continued, slipping into her best Texan drawl. "Oh, I've got mah goals. I don't always want to play the part . . . the sexpart . . . sexpot," she laughed. "After 'Lolita', I'll turn to other things."

Queried on the subject of sex, Annie gave it straight from the shoulder: "Too much, too much! What I mean is, too much for me; but not enough for the world. Even when I was a little girl, the boys wouldn't let me alone; and when I got older, men began to take more than an interest in me; I guess because they liked me . . . and of course, I liked them."

When Ann was just a kidling, she was sunning and stunning them in her tight-torso swim





suit at the poolside of the famous Shamrock in Houston. There at the tender age of 12, just the age of Lolita, Ann was breaststroking her way to a Junior Olympic title: as a matter of fact she set two records, "but they were soon broken," she admits ruefully. Finishing high school at St. Mary's in Austin, Texas, was something of a chore for Ann. "I was great in love literature, but numbers always threw me," she admitted; "and when I dreamed the things little girls dream of, I always dreamed of . . . guess! That's right, men!"

*Sexy Ann Atmar — Lolita In The Flesh
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